

DisabilityNOW

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with an interest
in disability

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Give us access to our TVs!

More than 200 deaf, blind, hearing and visually impaired people have lobbied MPs in a last-ditch attempt to make tv more accessible.

Groups from the Royal National Institute for the Blind, (RNIB) Royal National Institute for Deaf People (RNID), British Deaf Association and the Deaf Broadcasting Council met some 30 MPs at the House of Commons on 12 June to generate support for amendments to the Broadcasting Bill, now in its final stages.

The changes, tabled by Conservative MP for Harrow West, Robert Hughes, would require broadcasters to subtitle 95 per cent of their programmes, have sign language on ten per cent of programmes and audio describe 50 per cent of programmes, over ten years.

The Bill coincides with the introduction of new digital broadcast technology and the

licencing of at least 18 new digital tv channels.

Parliamentary campaigns officer for the RNID, Tim Sargeant, fears the Government will overturn the amendments before the summer recess in July.

If this happens, the new channels will be under no obligation to provide subtitles.

"At an earlier stage in discussions, the Government said the amendments would be too expensive," Mr Sargeant said.

"But the cost would be relatively small, and it is no justification for excluding 8.4 million deaf and hearing impaired people in this country."

Lord Ashley of Stoke, joint chair of the All Party Disability Group, added: "This



Thinking positive: Lord Ashley and MP Robert Hughes join campaigners at the Commons

RNID

could be the only chance to ensure that the broadcasting revolution doesn't exclude the interests of over eight million people."

According to the RNID, only 32 per cent of tv programmes are subtitled.

Except for limited news translation, less than one hour of the

672 hours of television programmes each week offer sign language interpretation.

Yet under the 1990 Broadcast-
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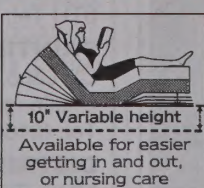
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DN survey helps change law

The Government will create new powers soon to enable traffic wardens and parking attendants to inspect orange parking badges on demand.

The pledge follows an investigation in last month's *Disability Now*, which found that misuse of the orange badge parking concession, now used by one in 12 vehicles, was "epidemic". In a unique survey, 90 per cent of disabled people said the scheme was being abused.

Liberal democrat MP Liz Lynne said she had urged the Government to do something because disabled people were fed up with the system being brought into disrepute.

Dave Allcock, development officer for the Access Committee for England, said: "It's a small step, but it won't make the scheme any more efficient. It will just give traffic wardens a power they won't use."

Direct payments threat for over-65s

At least 700,000 elderly people are being denied the right to buy and manage their own care.

But the Government has not gone back on its promise to include people with learning disabilities among 40,000 disabled people under 65 who qualify for direct payments.

And it has promised to review the situation with people over 65 in a year's time.

Tory MPs overturned a committee amendment on the Community Care (Direct Payments) Bill in June, which would have allowed local authorities to decide who would qualify for direct payments.

The House of Lords could force another Commons vote, but this is thought to be unlikely.

At the Bill's third reading in the Commons the Government won by 16 votes, 296 to 280.

Tory MPs Peter Thurnham

and Sir Andrew Bowden carried out their threats to vote with the Opposition (*DN June*).

Shadow spokesperson for disabled people Tom Clarke accused the Conservatives of staging the debate on the day of the Northern Ireland peace talks to ensure many Northern Irish MPs would be absent.

"Their cynical opportunism has denied older disabled people the opportunity to take control over their own care," said Mr Clarke.

"The Government's amendment sends out the wrong signal to older people - it appears they do not count," said Mr Thurnham, who agreed the Government had chosen a "good" time for the vote.

Under-Secretary of State for Health John Bowis said: "At the end of the first year of the operation of the scheme, we shall

Continued on page 2



Star quality: Belgian Pasqual Duquenne (left), who has Down's syndrome, won the best actor award at the Cannes Film Festival, along with co-star Daniel Auteuil, for the film *The Eighth Day*

POLYGRAM FILM INTERNATIONAL

No courtesy car

The Royal Insurance Motability scheme does not include a courtesy car except in the case of accident repairs.

Samuel and Jane Kayes of Knightswood, Glasgow, discovered this the hard way when they took their new Vauxhall, leased from Motability, to their garage in June to sort out a door rattle.

When the engineer said he would have to keep the car, they assumed they would drive away in a courtesy car. But they were told their Motability insurance did not cover servicing or other reasons.

"When I phoned the Motability Finance Ltd helpline, I was told there had been a lot of complaints," said Mr Kayes.

Mrs Kayes is angry because she had already signed the

three-year lease. "I feel I have been conned," she said. "The change should only apply to new customers. If I could hand this car back and change it for one from a dealer who supplies courtesy cars through their own insurance, I would do it tomorrow."

Motability operations director Cathy Grainger said Motability's block scheme has never provided a courtesy car except for repairs, but Eagle Star, Royal Insurance's predecessor, did provide seven days free cover to encourage dealers to provide a courtesy car.

She says it is up to dealers to keep their Motability customers happy. "But if there is a real need for insurance cover, we will look at it."

Mobility pay to be cut

Long-stay NHS patients could face losing the mobility component of their Disability Living Allowance if Government proposals are given the go-ahead.

Under the proposals, patients admitted to NHS hospitals or community homes will lose all mobility allowance after four weeks (12 weeks for children).

Long stay residents who now receive the higher rate will be downgraded from £33.90 to £12.90 a week.

Peter Lilley, Secretary of State for Social Security, announced the draft Social Security (Disability Living Allowance) Amendment Regulations 1996 in June, and if they are not opposed in the Commons, they will come into effect on 31 July.

Mencap is fighting the plans as it says the allowance is also

paid to people who cannot get around independently and who use it to pay for escorts, specialised transport, shared transport costs, cars and taxis.

A spokesman said: "People will lose two-thirds of their meagre total incomes."

"They are not sick and are not confined to bed, but they are likely to be confined to the place they live in, unless money is spent on taking them out."

The charity cites, as an example, how an adult with a severe learning disability, who has been in an NHS residential home, and whose mobility benefit is being used to maintain links with family and friends, will lose all benefit.

A spokesman for the Department of Social Security said patients using the Motability scheme (which provides cars for

disabled people and their families), who have an agreement with Motability Finance Ltd, would continue to receive payments.

"Only if they have applied for a car and are waiting to get one while in hospital will the renewal not be honoured."

Payments will stop when the three-year agreement runs out.

She added that wheelchair agreements would be covered.

But Motability fears that some drivers could still suffer.

A spokesman said: "There could be a case that someone who has a car goes into hospital, suffers a stroke, and needs a differently adapted vehicle as part of their rehabilitation."

"They would need to stop one agreement and start another one, which they could not do while in hospital."

Give us access to TV

Continued from page 1

-ing Act, all current terrestrial channels must subtitle 50 per cent of programmes by 2002.

RNIB spokesman, Joe Korner, said: "We hope the Bill will impose targets to include audio describe as it would be easy to set up through digital technology."

According to Television Licensing, only 27,000 of the 180,000 registered blind people have applied for a discounted television licence – usually because

they believe the tiny reduction is not worth the bother.

A blind person is given a 1.4 per cent discount on the £89.50 colour licence, even though the cost has risen by more than 700 per cent in the last 25 years.

A spokesperson for Television Licensing said they had no plans to make any greater reduction.

Mr Korner said: "The £1.25 reduction is derisory, but we wouldn't want to get a big reduction on the licence as an excuse for not providing audio describe."

Over-65s spurned

Continued from page 1

review it with a view to extending it to people over 65."

A spokesman from Age Concern said: "They are giving people the right to make personal decisions about care but are saying older people can't do this."

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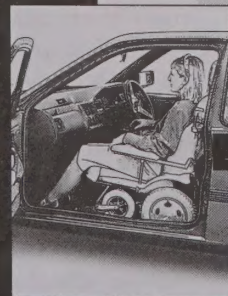
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Blair raises hopes

Labour party leader Tony Blair says a Labour Government would not rule out the prospect of civil rights legislation at a "later stage" – but adds that the party cannot commit itself to changing disability law.

Mr Blair went a step further than Shadow Cabinet Minister for Disabled People Tom Clarke (*DN June*) who said Labour would not introduce a comprehensive new civil rights act.

Speaking on the Radio 4 programme *Does He Take Sugar?* on 13 June, Mr Blair said he wanted to ensure that disability discrimination was based on the concept of civil rights.

"To begin with we will take the legislation as it is and try and make the improvement during the passage of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) itself."

Mr Blair said Labour would replace the National Disability Council with a commission that had teeth.

Speaking about the Act's clause which exempts employers of less than 20 people from being charged with discrimination, he said there should be a general principle about discrimination which would cover everybody.

He also backed community care direct payments for all disabled people, including those over 65.

He added: "The task is to release the great potential of everyone in society, including those with a disability."

In a later discussion, Minister for Disabled People Alistair Burt said he was still left in the dark about what Tony Blair planned to do and that the promised "new dawn" was not there.

Spokesman on social security and disability for the Liberal Democrats Liz Lynne said her party would get rid of the DDA and bring in a Civil Rights Disabled Person's Act.

Carers line set up

A free telephone helpline for carers, first piloted in the South East, (*DN June*) has been launched nationwide.

The line is part of the Caring for Carers campaign run jointly by Carers National Association, Family Welfare Association, Scope, and British Gas Home Energy.

Tel: (0800) 100100

Charities lose out

Charities have lost a concession exempting them from paying VAT when they advertise jobs.

The move was attacked by critics who claimed cash-strapped disability groups would lose out.

Motability called to account

The House of Commons Public Accounts Committee will investigate the Motability scheme in the autumn, after the National Audit Office publishes its report.

Chairman Robert Sheldon MP said: "There is no question but that the committee will have a hearing."

Committee member Peter Thurnham MP wants a full meeting with Motability's chief executive and the DSS permanent secretary.

There have been many calls for a hearing, most recently

from MP Alan Simpson, who again criticised the scheme in the Commons after the Channel 4 *Dispatches* programme in May.

Minister for Disabled People Alistair Burt said a scrutiny "would present no problem for ministers" or Motability.

Meanwhile, Tim Shapley, retiring secretary of the Joint Committee on Mobility for Disabled People (JCMD) after 14 years, has told the 27-member organisations: "I believe the JCMD has betrayed disabled people over the past several

years by not investigating the Motability situation and coming out strongly in support of its disabled customers against the 'powers that be'. If the JCMD is not there for that kind of pressure, I wonder what its role is."

Douglas Campbell, executive director of the Disabled Drivers' Association, a JCMD member, said: "We have failed to grasp the nettle and we should have."

Tim Shapley told *DN* that chairman Sir Peter Large had repeatedly declined to discuss Motability. "The trouble is he

has split loyalties as a governor of Motability and chairman of JCMD." Sir Peter, he said, writes the minutes of meetings.

Sir Peter "emphatically" refuted the suggestion that JCMD had betrayed disabled people in any way over Motability. "I think you will find that very few, if any, members of the committee agree with what he says."

"I thought I had successfully explained to Tim that Motability was operating a reputable business of inestimable value to disabled drivers and passengers."

Payments scandal

Disabled people on income support may have died without being told they were owed up to £12,500.

A report from the House of Commons Public Accounts Committee says the Department of Social Security failed to identify claimants living alone who had been entitled to the severe disability premium of income support since 1988.

And it slams the Government for not righting mistakes once they were brought to the department's attention by welfare rights groups.

"We find it quite unacceptable that the department took three years to rectify the errors," says the report.

The department finally paid up £90 million of arrears in hand-outs of between £30 and

£12,500, to 24,000 claimants. It has no record of the number of those who died while waiting for their arrears, but will pay them into their estates if a claim is made.

Alan Williams, Labour MP for Swansea West and a member of the committee, said: "The way it was set up was incompetent and the way it was disregarded for years was inexcusable." Another 40,000 dormant cases were being investigated, he said.

Disability Alliance director Lorna Reith said: "It is absolutely appalling that the Government has been so slow to act."

A Benefits Agency statement said: "The agency regrets any delays, but to reassign more staff to achieve earlier completion would have meant unacceptable delays in paying benefit to others."



Disabled racing driver Mark Haynes took David Trotter, from Watford, round Silverstone Grand Prix track after he won an Invacare contest.

Access body side-lined

The Access Committee for England has won a reprieve, but has lost its advisory role to the Minister for Disabled People.

The Government has agreed to two years funding, following a review which cast doubts over the committee's future (*DN February*). But loss of the advisory role confirms fears that the

committee is being side-lined.

Alistair Burt said the committee would continue to help and develop local access groups.

Committee chairman Peter Lainson was disappointed. "We hope the National Disability Council (which advises Mr Burt on the Disability Discrimination Act) will seek our views."



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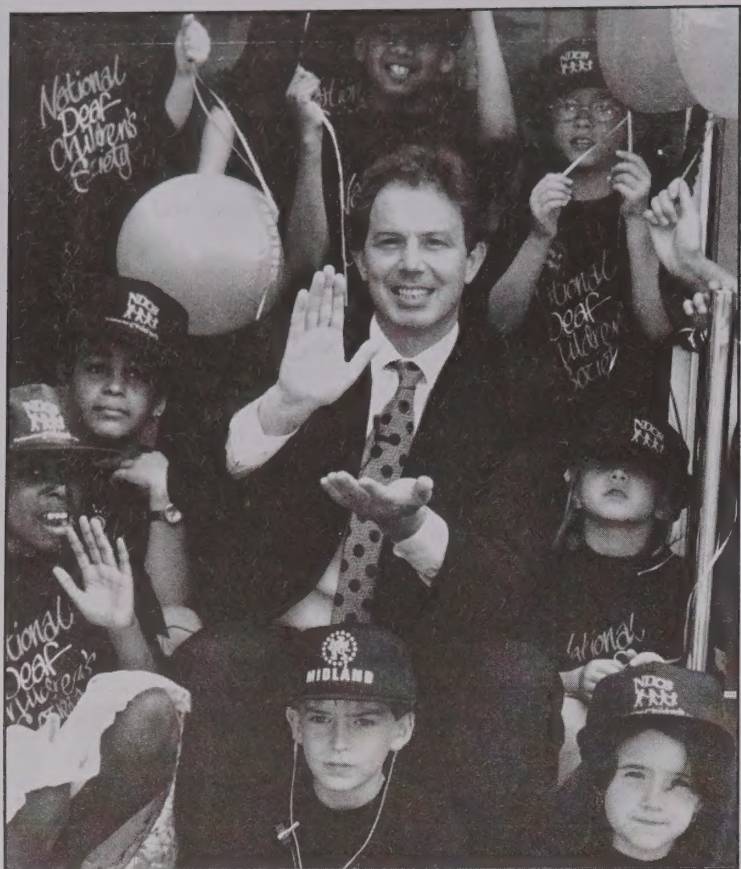
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Labour party leader Tony Blair joins deaf youngsters to launch the National Deaf Children's Society listening bus, which supplies families around the country with equipment and information

D-day for DDA

D-day is approaching – the new deadline for the first part of the Disability Discrimination Act is 2 December.

This is when the code of practice for eliminating discrimination in employment and for rights of access to goods, facilities, services and premises will come into effect.

The codes will govern how the Act is interpreted in the courts and on a day-to-day basis.

Education and Employment Secretary Gillian Shephard said: "There are many illustrative examples as well as significant additional guidance in the code."

"Helpful material such as how complaints might be made are included."

Mrs Shephard said more than 670 replies were received during the consultation period

and that the code had been redrafted as a result. It is now four times the size it was at the consultation stage.

Richard Exell, disability policy officer for the Trades Union Congress, is fairly happy with the employment code.

"However, we are concerned that the code says any reason for discrimination which isn't minor or trivial is substantial. But the word substantial could be open to interpretation, and employers could drive a truck through it."

The code for basic rights and access will be enforced from December, although Caroline Gooding, consultant to the Employers Forum on Disability, said there was still no reasonable timetable for when shopkeepers would have to

make adjustments to goods and services. She said this was expected to take up to ten years.

"The rules would eventually mean making changes to premises, for example," she said.

"We are told that this timetable will be announced at the end of June."

"All these codes will go before Parliament then and are most likely to be agreed."

Ms Gooding added that the codes still did not make it clear to disabled people just where to go for help. "There's a lot of information and it's not very sensible to expect people to understand it."

"And most shopkeepers won't even know about it."

"The Government should put out more publicity." (See also page 5)

Tebbit calls for better training

Lord (Norman) Tebbit says the training of carers is in a "deplorable state".

During a debate in the Lords, he said few disabled people had the cash to pay for private carers.

"They cannot afford to pay between £500 and £800 as a placement fee to private agencies who produce carers who on many occasions are poorly trained, untrained or unsuitable."

He said carers – family members as well as professionals – should be given a reasonable opportunity to get adequate, simple and sensible training.

Baroness Cumberlege, for the Government, said there was a review going on and a consultation paper would be out soon.

She added that some social services departments train carers already.

Tory MP takes caring stand

Under-Secretary of State for Health John Bowis has reaffirmed that community care charges should not be withdrawn if a patient cannot afford to pay.

Speaking in the Commons in June, he said the contribution figure across the country was only ten per cent, and it could certainly be increased without

causing hardship.

Responding to Tory MP George Walden, he said "ability to pay" existed and was discretionary. "It is a question of how it might be developed."

Mr Walden had questioned where spending on community care was heading, citing the problems in his Buckinghamshire constituency.

"What is emerging is not just a financial but a structural problem."

"The Government is providing more money each year for social services and community care, but the demand created by the 1990 community care legislation in particular is ever-increasing."

"When that demand overtakes the supply of new money, local authorities have to ration services."

"We seem to have embarked on an open-ended programme that will ultimately be unsustainable for any Government."

"The easiest way out for me is to blame the Government and ask for more money."

"That would get me the reputation of a caring person, but I would be guilty of gesture politics, of cynicism."

"We are in a vicious circle. I suspect there is a great deal of self deception on all sides, and much postponing of the day of reckoning. That day, I believe, will involve more targeting of expenditure on those in the greatest need."

Mr Walden pointed out that people who could afford to pay a reasonable amount towards their care still pay the same as those who are least well off.

"That means well-off people are getting subsidised services, and that subsidy is financed, at least in part, through the taxes paid by people in work who may be less well off themselves. Where is the equity in that?"

He suggested legislation to introduce means testing.

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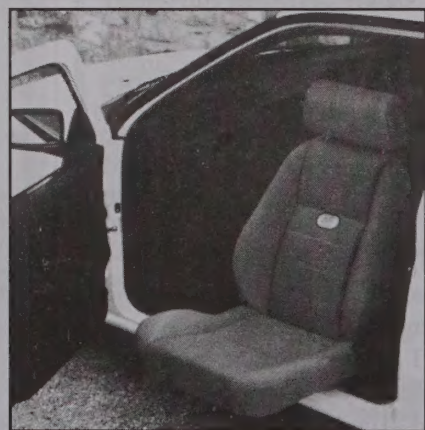
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Shops ignore disabled people

Most high street shops have not considered making plans or policies for disabled customers and are not geared up for carrying out the Disability Discrimination Act's code of practice.

A survey by the charity Scope found apathy and lack of co-operation among most firms. Only 43 of the 1,000 companies contacted actually responded to the survey and of those:

- 30 per cent did not provide parking for disabled customers
- 25 per cent did not provide any accessible toilets
- 88 per cent did not provide tactile signs

• 62 per cent did not provide disability awareness training.

The Federation of Small Businesses said that small firms did not understand the new legislation, had seen minimal information and felt unable to afford any necessary changes.

The report says: "Given the number of small businesses supplying goods and services, it is extremely disturbing that not one replied."

"There is an urgent need to encourage businesses of all sizes to begin to plan for and make changes now."

However Scope discovered

that some main chain stores had already begun to redesign buildings, introduce auxiliary aids and train staff in disability awareness.

Of those firms who did reply, Abbey National said it had an overall commitment to equality and was busy making positive changes, and McDonalds said its policy was to ensure level access and accessible toilets.

Sainsburys has two working groups to look at the issue and has a "Helping Hands" scheme to assist customers.

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When walking is a lottery...

A kind-hearted lottery scheme could put blind and elderly pedestrians at risk, says the National Federation of the Blind.

A national network of cycle ways costing £183 million is being planned in a bid to cut traffic pollution, but the federation claims that not enough thought has been given to separating cyclists from pedestrians.

The Millenium Commission (which gets its money from the National Lottery) is to fund Sustrans – a civil engineering charity – to build lanes on some pavements in the UK.

But the federation says many cyclists already use pavements illegally, and some authorities are actually permitting this. As a result one elderly woman has been killed in Southend, blind people have been injured, and some pedestrians have been disabled in collisions.

Now the Millenium Fund is to provide £42.5 million towards the project to create a 6,500-mile national cycle network by the year 2005. Fifty per cent will be on roads and 50 per cent off

road.

Federation publicity officer Jill Allen-King insisted the new cycle network should be separated physically from pedestrians with a fence or that it should be on roads.

"We are in favour of cutting pollution but we do not want the Government to encourage people to ride on pavements. We don't want more people injured and disabled."

Sustrans has followed Government guidelines for urban areas, which recommend a separation mark such as "a raised white line". Physical barriers will be used if needed.

But development director Carol Freeman confirmed that it would be up to local authorities to decide on the provisions.

The Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB) is backing the federation.

"The designs put forward do not fully safeguard the needs of pedestrians," said Andrew Gatenby, local authority consultant at the RNIB and Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

Mencap marks 50th with big party

Learning disabilities charity Mencap celebrates its 50th birthday from 23-26 August with a huge gathering of people with learning disabilities.

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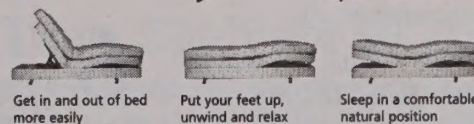
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Let the train take the strain: Wheelchair user Angela Raber and her carer try out London Underground's latest model. The trains, which will start running in February next year on the Jubilee line, have spaces for wheelchairs as well as yellow grab poles to guide visually impaired people. All 59 trains on the line will be replaced by new models by the time the Jubilee line extension opens in March 1998. BRENT MOORE

Strike looms over Dial-a-Ride

London Dial-a-Ride services will again risk strikes if cost cutting continues, says a new discussion document. It raises fears that the service may be privatised.

The paper claims there are inconsistencies in the structure and management of the service, funded by London Borough Grants Unit, which make it hard to meet financial targets set by London Transport.

Staff costs run at 60 per cent so wage cuts could be the next step to reduce spending.

The document *Time for a change?* produced by Dial-a-

Ride & Taxicard Users (DaRT), claims a strike would give London Transport the excuse to put the service out to competitive tendering.

DaRT chairman Danny Cripps said: "London Transport are passing the buck, not just in terms of administering the grant for DaRT, but also by refusing to take responsibility for the poor service. Staff and users are not very happy."

The service finds it difficult to meet cost targets since it does not have the freedom of bus operators to find new markets and choose its own vehicles,

according to the paper.

And while the biggest complaint of users is still the time it takes to book a trip, the document raises fears that wheelchair users and more severely disabled people may lose out.

As they take longer to get aboard, they run the risk of going over a cost per trip target of £10 in 1995-6.

A spokesman for London Transport said: "The increases in trip numbers in 1994-5 (11.9 per cent) and 1995-6 (15.2 per cent) suggest many individual users have made more trips."

All at sea on ferry

A ferry company has been slammed by disabled drivers for its "appalling" lack of access.

Wheelchair user Bob Jamieson was disgusted to find that during the nine-hour journey from Sheerness to Vlissingen in Holland, there were no public lifts, accessible toilets or cabins for wheelchair users.

Bob, from Basildon, and his carer Ray, booked the journey through a local travel agent.

According to Bob, the firm did not tell him how unsuitable the service was and there was no relevant information in the ferry company's brochure.

"When we arrived, I asked for, but wasn't given, a car parking space near the lift, so I had to be carried up to the third deck by ferry crew, which was dangerous for them and me.

"I couldn't get into the cabin or toilet without being carried. It was the worst ferry I have been on," Bob added.

Eurolink ferries, which runs the service, said it was the first complaint it had received. It has now given Bob his money back.

Executive director of the Disabled Drivers' Association, Douglas Campbell, said the facilities were appalling, but



that under the present law improvements did not have to be made.

"It is a merchant ship, which is not covered by accessibility rules," he said.

"This is a main route between two European countries which is basically unusable for people in wheelchairs and using walking aids. The boats are of the standards from 20 years ago."

The service was previously operated by Olau Line, which went out of business last year and sold its fully-accessible boats to P&O.

A Eurolink spokesman said that neither the travel agent or Bob had told the company that he was a wheelchair user.

"Mr Jamieson does not appear to have been aware of the physical limitation created by the construction.

"We have made every effort to ensure that relevant organisations and travel agents are aware of the limitations on the ships."

Aid for Russia

A British charity is to help children with cerebral palsy in the Ukraine.

The charity Aid to Russian Christians is to send a nurse to Kiev this summer to help a charity called Special Child run by Ludmila Ostapenko. The charity helps 35 children and their parents and carers.

Tel: 0181-460 6046

Customers bank on it

Barclays Bank is training 30,000 customer service staff at 2,033 branches in disability awareness.

It has also introduced a general information booklet, *Making our services available to our disabled customers*, which comes in standard print, large print, Braille and on audio tape and details services.

Barclays is planning for customers to receive letters from their branch in any of these forms, and for each bank counter to have at least one induction loop to assist hearing aid users.

It promises that Typetalk or text phones will be introduced into the bank's telephone banking service soon.

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Claimants in suicide bid

People with severe mental health problems are attempting suicide because of the difficulty in applying for Incapacity Benefit.

While they are exempt from filling in the Incapacity Benefit form and from the All Work Test to see if they are fit for work, many are falling through the net, according to a national study.

Staff at the Benefits Agency and the doctors it employs, often fail to identify serious ill-

nesses and the definition of these often varies.

Research carried out by the mental health charity Breakthrough shows that claimants receive an exemption often depending on where they live and who they are seen by.

The interim report, *Incapacity Benefit One Year On: The Effects of Changes in the Benefits System on People With Mental Illness*, looks at the impact of the benefit since it replaced Sickness and Invalidity

Benefit in April 1995.

Angie Schram, of Breakthrough, said: "We have been made aware of four attempted suicides and many more cases of people whose condition worsened."

A Benefits Agency spokesman said: "If there are differences of judgement, there is a procedure to make sure they're highlighted."

Meanwhile people with learning disabilities in Essex have been threatening suicide because of poor quality care services, says

learning disabilities charity Values Into Action.

Difficulties arose after Essex County Council began awarding contracts to private firms.

"There are cases of people with learning difficulties saying their quality of life is so poor that it was not worth continuing," said Jean Collins, Values Into Action director.

A spokesperson for the council said: "We have no knowledge of anybody saying they are likely to commit suicide."



Pioneer dies

Margaret Morgan MBE, one of the foremost pioneers of The Spastics Society (now Scope) has died, aged 74, writes former colleague, William Hargreaves.

Margaret joined the Society in 1957, and during her 26 years' service she worked in many positions, culminating in controller of personal social services.

Margaret pioneered the assessment and training of young people with cerebral palsy and was a tremendous counsellor to them and their parents, for which she was awarded an MBE.

A strong personality, not easy to argue with, she possessed a great capacity for friendship and evoked tremendous loyalty from her staff.

In retirement she worked with Headway and CHAD (Church Action on Disability), was DN's first agony aunt and later a stand-in for the DN counselling line.

Lin Berwick adds: Margaret Morgan knew what she wanted: she was going to work for the issue of cerebral palsy, come hell or high water. She was a great support for me and I will miss her greatly.



A great step: Raymond Capstick (above), who doctors said would never walk or talk, has proved them all wrong after successfully completing a 40-mile sponsored walk. Ray, 22, from Cumbria, who did not walk until the age of seven, has cerebral palsy. With no training, Ray did the 40 miles from Keswick to Barrow-in-Furness in 14 hours. "Now I've recovered, I've decided to do it every year." Mum Ann said: "Doctors told me Ray was retarded and to make the best of it. He's proved how wrong they were."

IAN KERSHAW

'Lend a hand' call

At least 1,500 disabled youngsters will be encouraged to take part in the Prince of Wales Trust for Volunteers each year, by the end of the century.

At present the annual figure is about 240.

The trust is planning a £3 million expansion to increase its total number of places from 4,000 to 25,000 by the year 2000.

Co-ordinator Linda MacRoberts said: "In 1994-95 about six per cent of the volunteers were disabled people and we want to keep to that".

The trust pays for a 12-week programme which includes community work and an Outward Bound-style course.

Meanwhile, disabled people are being urged to "lend a hand" in a bid to dispel the stereotype that volunteers are only white, middle-class, able-bodied women.

The National Centre for Volunteering said some mainstream organisations, such as charities and hospitals, were very reluctant to encourage disabled people to volunteer.

Head of external affairs, Fiona Dawe, said the centre hoped to work with disabled groups to encourage more interest.

It also wants to work with charities and other organisations to devise equal opportunity policies and to train existing staff on disability awareness.

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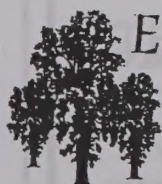


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Taxing catch to hand-out

A £7 million Government hand-out has been accepted with mixed feelings by people whose mothers took the thalidomide drug.

So far 460 people have come forward since the scandal.

The new money will go into a trust fund originally set up in 1973 by makers of the drug, Distillers. But the cash handed out will again be subject to 34 per cent tax.

Members of the Thalidomide Action Group are now urging the Government to make the money tax-free.

Freddie Astbury, chairman of the group, said: "We can claim ten per cent back, but it takes a year to process and we find it degrading and complicated."

Distillers paid £19 million into the fund in 1973 and last year, Guinness, who took over Distillers, gave £37.5 million.

At the cutting edge

A Newcastle carer says a mix-up by the city council over her help allowance could signal a widespread cut in services.

Part-time civil servant Lynda Wisbach cares for husband Philip, who uses a wheelchair following a stroke.

But without consultation, the family's social worker told her that the cleaner's hours would be cut.

Lynda, 38, who has an 11-year-old son, did not have an assessment, but was informed that a social services panel had decided Philip, 40, was getting better.

Philip's enabler works 18 hours a week and a cleaner comes in for six hours.

Lynda said: "I was told the cleaner was being cut to three hours which really worried me and made Philip very depressed - I just wouldn't have been able to cope."

The council has admitted that it made an error, and is sending a member of the disability panel to discuss Lynda's case.

A spokesman said: "A proposal was made by the panel but it will not be implemented."



Philip and Lynda Wisbach: Fearful of council's motives

"We usually do a full assessment. Obviously there was an error, and we will by looking at Mrs Wisbach's situation."

But Lynda is furious and believes other carers could be affected.

"It shouldn't have happened to us and I'm now worried that the council will pick on more vulnerable carers and try and cut their help back without an assessment in this way."

The Carers (Recognition and Services) Act came into effect on 1 April and gives Britain's 6.8 million carers the right to ask for their needs to be assessed when care packages are arranged.

The council's error comes after carers' groups voiced fears that hard-pressed local authorities would not be given any extra money by the Government to carry out assessments, and would be able to use their discretion when making decisions.

The Carers National Association said the council had been insensitive.

Assistant director Francine Bates said: "The authority appears to have been acting against the spirit of the Act."

"Linda is juggling work and caring and needs as much support as she can get."

Drop in social workers highlights community policy

Last year saw a fall in the number of social services staff - from 237,750 in 1994, to 233,860.

More than half of these were field social workers and home

care staff. About 30 per cent were working in residential accommodation.

The figures show how residential care homes for elderly people are being transferred from

local authority to independent control.

The Government says the drop is consistent with the shift to community provision, under the Community Care reforms.

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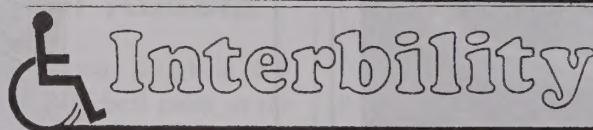
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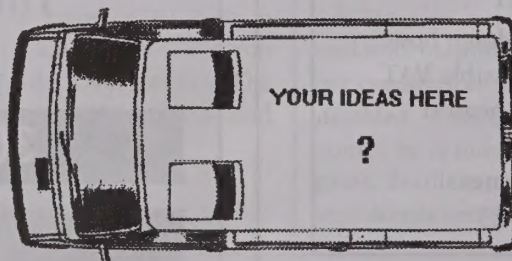
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Professionals open the door

The Association of Disabled Professionals (ADP) celebrated its 25th anniversary by playing down its scholarly image.

At its annual conference, the 300-strong group called for more disabled people in managerial and commercial positions to join.

Chairman Sue Maynard Campbell said many of those who were disabled made it clear that they did not identify with other disabled people.

"They either feel they haven't got time for us, or don't see the need until they come up against discrimination," she said.

"But the association can offer them a voice, give them information and is a useful networking tool."

The ADP campaigns on many issues, especially employment, and is presently working to improve the Disability Discrimination Act.

Tel: (01924) 270335

In brief

Inspired wheels

A wheelchair designed for Cambodia has been picked as one of the six finalists in the BBC Design Awards.

Charity Motivation developed the three-wheeled Mekong chair to suit the rural Cambodian environment.

It is made from wood and has easily repairable or replaceable parts, takes 20 minutes to assemble and costs £40.

Employers in dark

More than two-thirds of employers are unaware of the funding and advice available for the recruitment and training of blind or partially sighted people, according to a survey published by the national charity, Action for Blind People.

The survey heralds the Out of Sight — Out of Work? campaign which starts in September. This aims to help visually impaired people find secure employment by informing employers about support services.

Get in the picture

Calling all keen photographers. The Disabled Photographers' Society is inviting entries for its annual exhibition.

The exhibition will be held at the Sutton Centre for Independent Learning from 30 September-6 October, and entries must be received by the beginning of August.

Members of the society are eligible. It costs £5 to join.

Tel: 0181-547 1566

A worthy donation

The NHS organ donor register should receive a boost this year when seven million registration forms are circulated by Rotary International.

The association of business and professional people has adopted the register as its leading good cause for 1996, and its 65,000 members have pledged to sign up family and friends. The register is an electronic database of people who will become organ donors when they die.

Autism on line

Information about autism is now available on the Internet, through the National Autistic Society's (NAS) web site.

The site includes details of education and care services, training, family support, fundraising and publications. http://www.oneworld.org/autism_uk/ is the site address.

Boost for young games

The Youth Sport Trust, a charity which promotes sport in schools, has appointed a disability sports officer as part of its programme to increase integrated games.

So far, the scheme, which is aimed at improving UK sport in general, has been introduced in 900 mainstream and 100 special needs schools.

Schools get equipment and a set of instruction cards for

teachers. Games can be modified to allow disabled children to take part alongside able-bodied children and the trust can provide adapted equipment.

The sports officer, Ken Black, will help to implement the programme by supporting trainers.

"We want teaching staff to develop an inclusion mentality, so that they look at ways of including rather than excluding," said Mr Black.

The scheme, introduced to schools in April, has three parts: Top Play, for four-nine year olds; BT Top Sport for seven-11 year olds (sponsored by British Telecom); and Top Club which aims to improve links with sports clubs.

"Our aim is to try to be in every primary school and every special school by the year 2000," said fundraising manager Helen Vost.



GRAHAM BOOL PHOTOGRAPHY

Margaret's on victory course

Margaret McEleny powered her way to two world records at the BT-sponsored National Open Championships in June. She won the 50 metres breast stroke and the individual medley.

Visually impaired swimmer Chris Holmes, six times gold medalist at the Barcelona Paralympics, smashed records in the 200 metres backstroke and freestyle.

"Being expected to do that again has been quite a burden," said Holmes.

"Setting two world records two months before the Paralympics is just the tonic I need for my confidence."

Overall, Britain took 12 world records out of 28, in a competition boasting 290 swimmers from 17 countries.

Britain will send 51 swimmers to the event in Atlanta which runs from 15-26 August.

Duke rewards winning duo

Janet McMorran, the UK's number one and world number seven ladies wheelchair tennis player, received a Variety Club of Great Britain and Outward Bound Trust Disabled Sports-woman's Award, from the Duke of Edinburgh in May.

Field athlete Ian Hayden, chairman of the British Sports Association for the Disabled and Paralympic gold medalist, took the mens' award.



DOUG MCKENZIE

Amputee golfers weather the storm

Sportsmen and women slogged it out in high winds at the sixth British Amputee and Les Autres Sports Association (BALASA) Federation Games, which were held in Swindon in May.

Douglas Greer took gold medals in the long-jump with a flying effort of 5.72 metres, as well as gold medals in the

100 metres and 200 metres sprints.

Kathy Smith won the ladies archery gold, and is confident that she can improve on her current world fourth ranking to take a medal in the Atlanta Paralympics. Chris Christopherson took the men's gold.

In the golf, Bert Hintz took

gold in the above knee category, with Keith Bedford taking the below knee section. George Carter played in the arm category to snatch gold.

Meanwhile, more than 130 amputee and celebrity golfers got together at North Middlesex Golf Club in May to raise £5,000 for BALASA.

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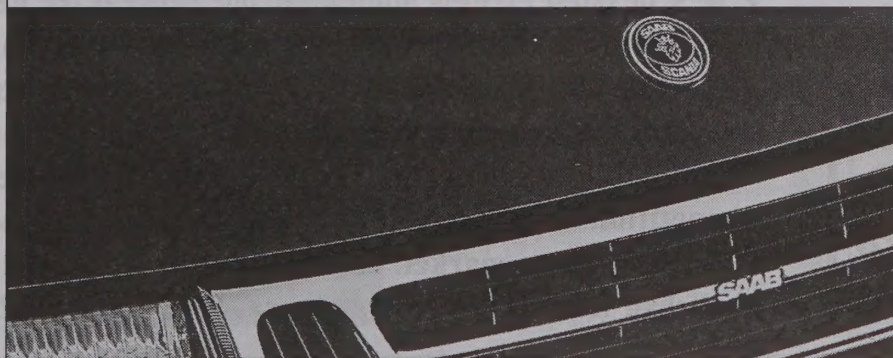
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A man who stammered for 43 years claims he can rid people of the problem.

David McGuire uses a short, intensive course, combining confidence building with a breathing technique used by opera singers, and claims a three-quarter success rate.

Andrew Rees, a chronic stammerer, who took the £500 course said: "By the third day I was speaking in front of 150 people."

Tom Shanks of the British Stammerers Association said that stammers often returned after intensive courses but added: "The majority of our members who have taken the course thought that it was worthwhile."

The McGuire Institute, PO Box 16, Uckfield, East Sussex TN22 5ZJ

Pill AIDS worries

A hormone found in some brands of the contraceptive pill increases the risk of rhesus monkeys contracting their equivalent of HIV, say American researchers.

Doses of progesterone caused thinning in the vaginal linings of monkeys at New York University's Medical Centre and Aaron Diamond AIDS Research Centre, making them more prone to the virus.

Speculation is mounting that a similar thinning could occur in women taking contraceptive pills containing synthetic forms of the hormone, increasing their risk of HIV infection. The US National Institute of Health admits there may be a risk.

But other scientists have played it down, fearful of a spate of unwanted pregnancies.

"It has not been proven that oral contraceptives increase the likelihood of infection," said Kaye Wellings, of the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

"The chances of pregnancy are hugely greater than the chances of infection — it's a question of putting this in perspective."

Dust fears

Government measures to cut particle emissions from road traffic exhausts, which have been linked to breathing problems such as asthma, don't go far enough, say the Government's own advisors.

In London, emissions would need to be cut by two thirds to



Jo Leslie of the Science Museum, London, puts the brain of a person who had Alzheimer's disease under the spotlight at the launch of an exhibition which runs until September.

STUART FREEDMAN

meet the Government's own targets, say the Quality of Urban Air Review Group in a report published in May. In the capital, 86 per cent of particles of less

than 10 millionths of a metre across (PM10s) came from traffic exhausts in 1991.

The Government's Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards

(EPAQS) recommended last year that PM10 levels should be limited to a maximum of 50 micrograms per cubic metre over 24 hours. But that has often been exceeded in major UK cities.

Chair of the group Professor Roy Harris also believes that new European plans for a 52 per cent cut by the year 2010 are not enough.

"Current regulations and those which have yet to come into force will not be sufficient," he said.

Racing pulses

Researchers are to put blood cells under the speed camera to study what influences blood flow.

In the long-term they think it may lead to early diagnoses for certain disabilities.

As red blood cells flow through tiny vessels called capillaries, they have to squeeze themselves to fit. But they may lose flexibility in people with diabetes and sickle cell anaemia before symptoms appear.

Now a team from Imperial College, London, and the University of Hertfordshire are using a camera to measure the speed of cells travelling through tiny channels cut into silicon. But research is at an early stage, they warn.

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Prevention better than cure

Osteoporosis was once thought of as the "elderly woman's disease", but more men and young people are now being affected. Helen Gregory finds out the facts and two 50-year-olds tell their story.

Every three minutes someone has a fracture as a result of osteoporosis. It causes 40 deaths a day and is likely to affect one in three women and at least one in 12 men in the UK, according to the National Osteoporosis Society (NOS).

This alarming news heralds the start of National Osteoporosis Week (24-30 June).

Once thought of as only a disease of the elderly, osteoporosis is now hitting thousands of women in their 50s and some as young as 20. And more men are now affected; a few years ago, only 1 in 20 were thought to be at risk.

The disease attacks bones, making them so porous that they break very easily. A minor fall can then result in a fracture, usually of the hip, spine or wrist. People often end up with a bad stoop.

Osteoporosis is usually caused by a lack of the female hormone oestrogen, following the menopause, but in men it can be prompted by lack of testosterone, long term use of corticosteroid — a drug for rheumatoid arthritis or asthma — or as a result of other problems, such as thyroid trouble.

For most people, it can creep up without them realising, and

the first sign is a fracture. But by this time a third of the skeleton may have been lost.

Most at risk are women who have had an early menopause (before 45), those who have missed periods (usually as a result of over-dieting or over-exercise), heavy smokers and those who have had a fracture.

The society believes there could be five million people affected by early next century unless major preventative action is taken.

Osteoporosis costs the NHS more than £750 million each

year and at least 30 per cent of beds in orthopaedic wards are now filled with osteoporosis fracture patients. But the society claims lives are being put at risk because local health authorities are not implementing government guidelines.

A nation-wide survey in February this year found that 62 per cent of authorities did not have an overall strategy for tackling osteoporosis. There are also only 90 bone scanning machines in the UK which means there is not enough preventative work being carried out.

Society director Linda Edwards says: "Lack of action is condemning thousands to a life destroyed by fractures, pain and deformity because they are being denied early diagnosis and effective treatment."

FIVE POINT PLAN FOR PREVENTION

1. Regular weight-bearing exercise is good for bones — try to go for a brisk 30 minute walk, do a keep-fit class or play a game of tennis at least three times a week.
2. A good daily intake of calcium is needed. Include dairy products and green leafy vegetables in a balanced diet.
3. Smoking damages bones — give up today.
4. Keep your alcohol consumption down — excessive alcohol intake is harmful.
5. Obtain advice about hormone replacement therapy (HRT). HRT taken for at least five years halves your risk.

For more information contact the National Osteoporosis Society, tel: (01761) 471771 or at PO Box 10, Radstock, Bath BA3 3YB.

'We pray it can be arrested'

Two years ago I was diagnosed as having the incurable disease of osteoporosis in my spine and hips — at the age of 48.

I had to work very long hours with my bookkeeping and accounting business and suffered pain in my back, hips and wrists, but I thought it was ageing and postural pains through sitting long hours over a desk.

Each day it seemed harder to work — the pains wouldn't go away and I felt so weak and poorly.

I was offered a bone scan at the Essex Menopause Clinic as a matter of routine and six months later the doctor gave me the news.

I sat spell-bound in shock. I had never heard of osteoporosis before.

I was immediately put on the Didronel drug and given HRT patches, but the pain would not go away and I felt emotionally and physically weak and frail.

"How can I beat this?" I thought. "I must learn about it so I can help myself."

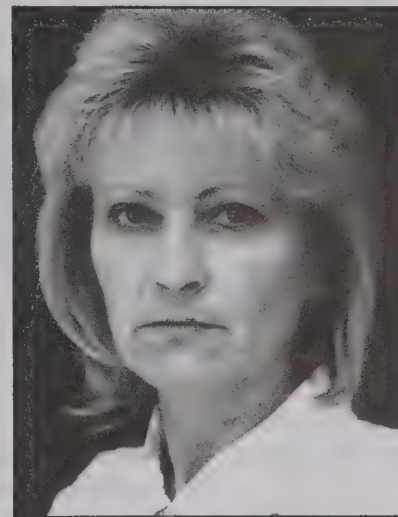
I was in the depths of despair. How can my quality of life be taken from me at the age of 50? I became bitter and angry.

Soon afterwards I had to undergo a hysterectomy which was very traumatic. Through the NOS I learned the awful truth that the disease could have been prevented by diet and HRT alternatives.

Later, through the society, I also learned that the disease is hereditary. After many months, my 33-year-old son's GP, who had previously told him: "Men don't get osteoporosis", gave him a test and it was confirmed my son had the disease. We pray that it can be arrested.

I am still trying to come to terms with it all. I cannot write for too long or sit for too long. It is painful to bend down. I have a district nurse who comes to give me injections.

My advice is educate yourself about this disease, and prevent it by exercise, a high calcium diet and lots of walks.



Jean Nicholl

EXPRESS NEWSPAPERS

'I didn't know what osteoporosis was'

Tony Edwards is a man with a mission — to educate East Anglia about osteoporosis.

At 58, he is one of the increasing numbers of men with the disease and as chairman of the NOS group in Norwich, he devotes most of his time to the cause.

A former swimming pool engineer, Tony was forced to leave work with what he thought was a slipped disk.

"I suffered back pain for five years and it wasn't until my doctor was away two years ago that a relief doctor diagnosed osteoporosis," he says.

"I didn't even know what osteoporosis was — I was shocked but relieved to be given a proper diagnosis."

Tony found he had fractured five vertebrae which had caused his back to bow.

He has lost one and a half inches in height and now walks with a stick. He has constant back pain and cannot raise his

arms above his head.

"I had to stop work and now have to be extremely careful as any of my bones could break quite easily."

Tony believes bad diet and over-exercise as a young man caused the problem, although his elderly father has now developed it.

"It is probably hereditary as



Tony Edwards

NOS

well, so I have told my three grown-up children about it.

"I've warned them to have a good diet and to exercise moderately in case there is a chance they get it too."

He says most people still don't realise that men are susceptible.

"Of our 284 members, about a quarter are men, and these figures are just the tip of the iceberg."

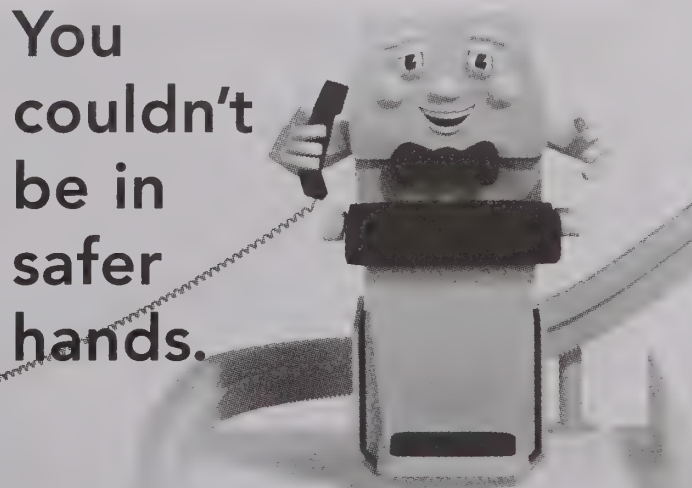
Tony is slightly bitter that his diagnosis took so long, but says generously that at the time, few people, including health officials, knew of osteoporosis.

"That's why I set up our local group, as I realised then that the nearest one was about 100 miles away."

He adds that this ignorance inspires him to educate people, especially doctors.

"I'm just going to keep going round to surgeries and health centres giving out information until they're all sick of the sight of me."

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A true survivor's tale

Linda Hart found writing her diary a cathartic experience. It has now won her a top award. She talks to Rod Hermeston.

The cottage sits next to a small village green. A huge chestnut tree casts a reassuring shade over the whole scene.

It's a quiet little spot in the village of Hose, near Melton Mowbray. But having been told by Linda Hart that the psychiatric hospital has been pressuring her to call in today, I feel apprehensive, half expecting the calm to be shattered by police cars screaming round the corner.

Linda, 49, a former psychiatric worker who has schizophrenia, is subject to Section 3 of The Mental Health Act and could be taken away at any time.

She is also the winner of the MIND Book of the Year Award for *Phone at Nine Just to Say You're Alive*, an account in diary form of her imposed stay in various psychiatric wards. The competition was judged by writers Blake Morrison, Fay Weldon and Michele Roberts.

Linda's position under Section 3 also means that she cannot vote (rather insulting for someone who once stood as a candidate in local council elections) and must take drugs which cause side-effects such as spasms, hormonal changes and slurred speech.

"It's awful someone having that amount of power over me. It knocks my confidence and my self-esteem," Linda says.

After she first developed schizophrenia in 1985, Linda, a



A novel experience: Linda hopes to educate the media and public through her writing

LEICESTER MERCURY GROUP LTD

qualified teacher in English and psychology, had to give up her job as a consultant and trainer with the charity Home Start. Her husband left her as a result of the illness. She has two sons, Jack, 27, and William, 26.

"I don't take my clothes off in public, I haven't got a split personality and I don't murder people."

After Linda's first period of illness, she began to work in the mental health field. But when she relapsed in 1993, her life became more difficult because she was being treated by her colleagues.

"It turned out they were threatened by me because they thought I would be judging their skills and that I was also very aware of my rights."

Linda was sectioned soon after admission to hospital in September that year, after she attempted to hang herself in the ward toilet. She had heard the voice of her dead father telling her to join him. This was the man who had made her mother pregnant but married her grandmother, and who she had found dead when she was three years old. She believes the traumatic experiences probably contributed to her illness.

The suicide attempt led to a prolonged stay in a number of psychiatric wards where Linda

constantly battled for her release.

She acknowledges that this sometimes came from a desire to commit suicide as well as a wish to go home. Looking back, Linda knows that she was suffering from a life threatening illness and needed to be kept safe from herself. But she believes that the attitude of the medical profession was, and can be, harmful.

"It makes it all feel like detainment, especially calling it parole when you went out for a walk. I felt very punished."

She believes the system crushes a person's identity.

"Bits of my personality were treated as if they were symptoms, not just me."

During a period of real despair, she says in her book: "First and foremost I'm a person; secondly I'm a patient. What does being a patient mean? Is there a single format or description – a set of rules that govern that identity?... It is as though there is a mythical being or several, like 'patient', 'normal', 'sick', 'well'."

Linda started the diary to help her cope with a situation where she had no control.

"I sat down to record my experiences at a time when I was in absolute despair. I could say what I wanted to say and try to make sense of what was going on as opposed to what I was being told was going on."

Now she hopes the book will

contribute to the education of the media and public.

"There is an element of mission about it now, since it gives an alternative view of schizophrenia from the one which the media have. I don't take my clothes off in public, I haven't got a split personality and I don't murder people."

Linda hopes the legal framework for dealing with mental illness can be tipped further in favour of the individual.

"The law is very clumsy and ill-suited to individual and personal problems of an emotional nature."

She believes that community care needs to be funded properly in order to allow treatment of the individual and to reduce the power of the hospitals.

She has written a play, *Psycho Songs*, for a local mental health project which tries to convey those needs.

She is also in the middle of writing a novel, after trying to return to work but having another relapse.

At the moment she is waiting for another tribunal to try to have the Section 3 removed.

"I need some support, but I don't need to be watched. I don't want to be dead – I want to be alive."

Phone at Nine Just to Say You're Alive costs £7.99.

We've got six copies to give away – send your name and address to Phone Book Offer, *Disability Now*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

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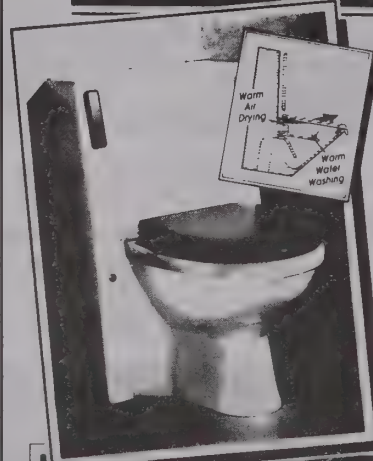


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Excited: Daniel Munnings

Going fishing

Two *DN* readers are off to Scotland for a fly fishing trip of a lifetime, courtesy of Total Hygiene (who market the Clos-O-Mat toilet).

Raymond Knight and 13-year-old Daniel Munnings were winners in a competition launched in *DN* in February and both will enjoy an all-expenses-paid holiday on the River Doon.

Wheelchair user Raymond Knight from Andover was thrilled to hear he'd won. "Just the job. It's really great," he said "I just hope the rivers won't have dried up."

Daniel Munnings from Selby, who also uses a wheelchair, is going to Scotland with his dad. Daniel can't wait: "I love fly fishing. I'm really excited."



Thrilled to win: keen fisherman Raymond Knight

Kids get a big lift

Bathtimes will be less bothersome for disabled children at a residential centre in Hove thanks to *DN*/Keep Able's bath lift competition.

Tracy Brown beat over 100 entries to win a Pisces bath lift worth £700. Tracy, senior care assistant at Ceres House, couldn't believe she'd won. "I was really surprised," she said.

She thinks the lift will be a real benefit to the centre. "We've already got one which is great. It's just going to make life easier for the staff and the children here."



Mark Speed from Keep Able with lift winner Tracy Brown
FOCUS PHOTOGRAPHY

They're up and away

15 *DN* readers have won tickets to the 25th International Air Tattoo in July. Congratulations to: G Woolley from Blackwood, C Tovey from Kidderminster, P Craig from Farnworth, W Mead from Bridgend, V Ferreira from London, F Hughes from Swansea, D Hichliffe from Blackpool, J Wood from Oldham, H Allton from Skegness, S Hands from Birmingham, M Beck from London, J Vaughan from Bromley, J Collier from Bristol, K Truss from Maldon and S Sharp from Sheffield.

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Going shopping? Know your rights

Whether you buy a wheelchair or a fashion accessory, your rights are the same, says Indu Varma. Here is her briefing on the law.

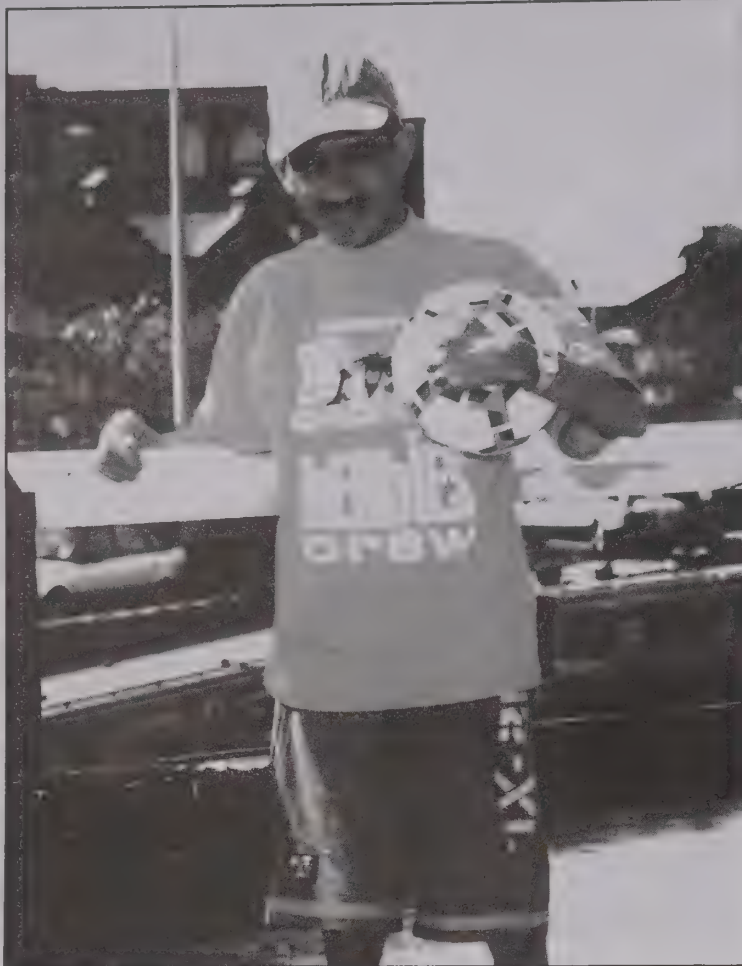
Faulty goods

Under the amended Sale of Goods Act (SGA) 1979, the goods you buy should:

- * belong to the person selling them
- * fit any description you were given in, say, advertising or packaging
- * be of satisfactory quality (durable, safe and free from minor faults)
- * be reasonably fit for their purpose or fit for a specific purpose that you name
- * match any sample you have been shown.

If you have very special needs, eg, shoes, check that what you are buying *will* suit you and ask the supplier to confirm this in writing.

Responsibility for a faulty item, or something which wears out or breaks down within an unreasonably short time, rests with the retailer not the manufacturer. (Establishing "unreasonable" might be difficult, but be persistent and try to get an independent expert's report.)



Teenager or pensioner, as a shopper it pays to know your rights

RAY TOWERS

You are entitled to a full refund if you reject quickly. Don't feel obliged to accept anything else, such as an exchange, credit note or repair if you don't want to. Notices saying "no refunds are given" are against the law.

You are entitled to check goods thoroughly before you lose the right to reject them, so don't be put off by being told

you are too late. Even if it is too late for rejection, you will still be able to claim compensation such as the cost of a repair.

Your rights to claim compensation for breach of contract or negligence last for six years (five in Scotland) and three years if it is personal injury. Remember, once you have accepted a final offer, you cannot go back and ask for more.

Manufacturers' guarantees are additional to your rights under the SGA. So if you are told the goods are not guaranteed, don't be put off.

Your rights are not affected by having a written guarantee either.

Returning unwanted goods

If you change your mind about something you have bought, retailers are not obliged to offer money back or exchange, but many of them will. The goods must be in the same condition as when you bought them and should be returned without delay.

Unsafe goods

The Consumer Protection Act 1987 covers items supplied after March 1988 and protects you against goods that are unsafe and cause injury or damage – even if you are not the person who bought them. The product has to be unsafe, not just badly made.

If the product has a defect and someone is injured, or damage of more than £275 is done to property, you can claim against the manufacturer.

From June 1998, goods declared by the manufacturer to be medical devices must have a CE mark – meaning they are considered by the manufacturer to be safe and fit for the purpose.

Returning presents

Something faulty should be given back to the giver for them to return: the contract is between the buyer and the seller. You can try returning it yourself; it sometimes works.

Proof of purchase

Legally you don't have to have a receipt if you want a refund for an item, but you have to be able to prove where and when it was bought. Many shops will offer an exchange or credit note without a receipt. Other evidence, like a bank statement or your companion as a witness to the transaction, can be used.

Mail order

For extra protection, say, if the company stopped trading, check if it belongs to the Mail Order Protection Scheme (MOPS).

There is no legal requirement that the goods should arrive within a certain time, although this has to be "reasonable". If you want something to arrive by a certain date, make sure you let the seller know and make time the essence of the contract.

You are entitled to claim postage and packing if you want to send something back because it is faulty, not as described, or not fit for its purpose. But you probably won't get a refund for postage if you return it just because you don't want it.

If you are buying a larger item, or an expensive one, or a vital piece of equipment, make sure the company will give you time (say ten days) to really try it out and return if it is not suitable. And find out who will have to pay the delivery charges.

Seconds

You cannot return an item because of any faults that were pointed out at the time of purchase, but you are entitled to return it if you find out later that it has other faults.

Buying secondhand

The SGA still applies to something bought secondhand. But its age, condition and price will be taken into account in establishing whether it is of satisfactory quality.

Credit card and hire purchase

If you bought by credit card and the price of each item was over £100, your claim can be against the card issuer who is "jointly

and severally liable" with the retailer.

For anything bought by hire purchase, the claim will be against the finance company – they own the articles until you have paid the last instalment.

VAT

Products that are designed solely for disabled people are zero rated. You don't have to be registered as disabled, but the supplier has to be registered for VAT. Just fill in a form declaring your disability and give it to the supplier of the goods or services. Some suppliers have printed forms.

You can get more information from leaflet 701/7/94 at any tax office (see under *Customs and Excise* in the phone directory).

Contracts and small print

Generally speaking, if you have signed a document you will be bound by the conditions, whether or not you have read them. So don't sign unless you have read it.

If you don't agree with some of the terms, cross them out and ask the representative to sign next to them or get the document retyped.

If you do sign, ask for a copy showing the signatures of everyone who signed. Your rights under the SGA cannot be taken away and other terms must be fair and reasonable.

If you change your mind, you can cancel a contract within five days for a credit agreement if it was not signed at the creditor's or trader's premises; within seven days for contracts made at home if a salesman calls without an invitation from you; and within 14 days for timeshare contracts if signed in the UK.

Buying privately

If you buy something privately, eg, from a personal advertisement, the whole situation changes.

There are no legal requirements that the product must be of satisfactory quality or fit for its purpose. So try to make a note of what the seller says about the item, and take someone along as an independent witness.

If you are buying through an advert, keep the advert just in case. If the seller makes false claims, does not own the goods or they don't fit their description and you act quickly, you should be able to get your money back. Otherwise, you can keep the item and ask for compensation.

Indu Varma is a researcher at the independent research charity RICA.

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'He's a spastic - he'll never walk. I'll see him in six months' time.'

That was how Ruth Bushnell learned her son had cerebral palsy. Are doctors more caring today, she wonders.

A cliché yes, but I *do* remember it as though it were yesterday. What should have been a routine hospital check-up for our disabled son thirty years ago became much more than that.

The day started well enough with my good neighbour taking care of our toddler, Mark. Although my husband could not get leave of absence (he was a schoolmaster), he and I had agreed what questions to ask at the outpatients' clinic.

We had seen a programme on tv the weekend before about cerebral palsy and noticed the similarity between Simon's scissor movement with his legs as well as other mannerisms, so we decided to query all this with the doctor.

Things started to go wrong just after the bus pulled in at my stop. Simon had hydrocephalus, a condition which had resulted in his head growing far more quickly than the rest of his body. When he was in his carry-cot it was

difficult to prevent it becoming top-heavy and tipping up. The bus was one of those which had no conductor and, as I began to struggle up the steps, I asked the driver if he could give me some help. "Not part of my job lady," was his brusque reply.

The hospital was, and still is, one of those Victorian edifices built to the greater glory of some local benefactor. But it still had an air of melancholy, with its dreary paint and lack of facilities or outpatients.

The appointment was for 2pm. As I watched the comings and goings of the other patients and saw the clock's hands creeping on towards 3pm and then 4, I was glad I had packed changes of nappy (no disposables in those days) and extra bottles of milk.

Eventually, at ten minutes to five, Simon's name was called. The small cubicle contained just a couch on which I laid him. He appeared very vulnerable when undressed.

He was then aged ten months, but did not look it. Born two months prematurely, he had had a brain haemorrhage at two weeks. We had been told: 'he will be on the slow side, and perhaps have difficulty learning to read. He'll take longer as well to walk and talk.'

But, with time and patience,

there seemed to be some real possibility of progress.

There was no chair in the cubicle so, when the doctor came hurrying in, I remained standing by the couch.

"Ah yes," he said, "let's see."

see how difficult it was to get Simon to take solid food.

"Well, I'll see him in six months' time. You can dress him now."

He was about to disappear through the cubicle curtains when I asked the question

eyes filling with tears through pity for our baby, and through tiredness too, he added: "Not to worry. He is what we call ineducable, but he'll probably become quite socially acceptable." With that he walked out.

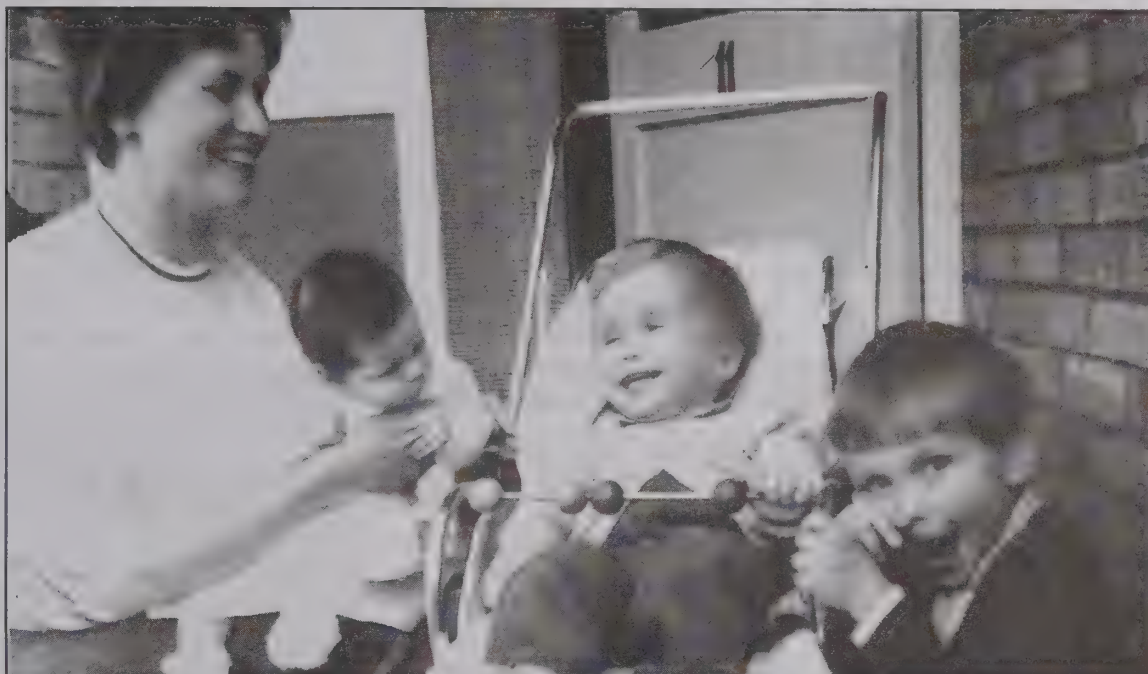
30 minutes to wait for the bus home. I felt as though I had been punched in the stomach.

We had always accepted that Simon would be "backward". But to be told he would never be able to run and play with his brother, or do any of the other things children do, seemed an infinitely crueler fate for our little one, who, in the words of the midwife who had delivered him, had been in "such a hurry to come into the world."

My husband was waiting for us at my bus stop. When we got home, I told him and we comforted each other, our grief being for our child, not ourselves.

I never saw that doctor again. On the next visit to the hospital, six months later, we learned he had been promoted to a position at Great Ormond Street. Whatever qualities the authorities were looking for, I cannot think that tact and sensitivity were high on the list.

So, thank you doctor. That day nearly 30 years ago when you gave me the body-blow of your blunt diagnosis is etched on my mind - as clearly as the day that Simon died, just over two years later.



Happy times: Ruth Bushnell with her three children (from left): Sarah, Simon and Mark

He gave Simon a perfunctory examination. "Could do with putting on some weight, couldn't he?" If only the doctor had been around at feed times to

uppermost in my mind. In a very matter-of-fact voice the doctor replied, "Oh yes, he's a spastic - he'll never walk." Seeing my reaction (possibly

I cannot remember the next few minutes nor my exit from the hospital. I do remember being outside again in the street only to find that I had another



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Letters to the Editor



Disability Now, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ
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e-mail: dnow@d-access.demon.co.uk

A grant for down-sizing

I have a problem that is, no doubt, shared by others.

I live in a conventional two storey house, but due to a muscle wasting condition in my legs, I am increasingly finding the stairs a problem.

Before very much longer I shall have to sell my house and buy a bungalow. The cost of a bungalow normally far exceeds that of a house.

What I would like to see is a financial grant to help defray this price difference.

When I have raised the idea before, it has been greeted with

hoots of laughter and derisory comments, but as with wheelchairs, it is a genuine requirement for a disabled person.

Far too often the needs and requirements of disabled people are lumped together. Few people realise our needs are individual to our condition.

I hope the Government's action over supplying wheelchair vouchers is just the start of a fresh, new outlook towards us. If so, it is long overdue.

John Clancy
Gillingham, Kent

Home care assistants

As a representative of a group of disabled students who study at a Sixth Form College in Leicester, I would like to tell you of one of our findings.

Having discussed the provision of home care services in Leicestershire, we think home care assistants should add caring during leisure

activities to their tasks.

All of us are wheelchair users needing 24 hour care. It would be useful to be able to call on someone to accompany us to the theatre, concert or pub without having to rely on a family member or friend.

We all have various interests and a need for space, but are restricted by the limitations of our bodies.

Susan Grieves
Gateway Sixth Form College
Leicester

Gemma

(d.o.b. 19/12/84)



Gemma is an 11 year old child with special needs. She has epilepsy which is controlled by medication. Gemma has a learning disability and requires supervision. She uses Makaton signs and has a vocabulary of a few words to communicate her needs. She understands simple spoken language. Her hearing and vision are fine.

Gemma can walk, run and play. Her gait is uneven. Gemma loves outdoors, especially walking in the park and kicking a football.

Gemma is an affectionate child, who is able to show her feelings appropriately. When she feels she is not being understood, she tends to have angry outbursts. She has had a few sessions with a play therapist which

has helped her understand her situation. She gets on very well with children and adults alike. Her hobbies are: swimming, painting, drawing, listening to music and watching Disney videos. She also enjoys going out to shops and eating out.

Gemma attends a special school where she is making good progress. (She is statemented under the Children's Act 1989.) Gemma has regular contact with her mother and maternal grandparents. This will need to be maintained in a structured way. Gemma is of white parentage and needs a white, long-term foster family. Ideally we would like experienced parents with experience of disability, possibly where Gemma could be the youngest within an older teenage sibling group. Her new family would need to live within a reasonable travelling distance of West London. An enhanced fostering allowance is available.

Contact: Inderjeet Wilkhu, Social Worker, Family Placement Section, London Borough of Hounslow, 26 Glenhurst Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9BX, tel: 0181-862 7715/7722. Alternatively contact: Mina Sunkerset, Social Worker in Children with Disability Team, London Borough of Hounslow, 41 New Heston Road, Heston, Middlesex TW5 6LW, tel: 0181-862 7764.

'Mainstream' the Movement

Vic Finkelstein's article (*DN*, February) has rattled a few cages. It does not matter if some people are upset. What is important is how we judge the way forward for disabled people and our organisations in this country.

Some 25 years ago, many of us had put our efforts into campaigning for a "disability income". We looked to the state and a new government to improve our conditions of life and relieve poverty.

The then Labour Party supported our grass roots campaign for a disability income and all our efforts were going to be rewarded by the new government! It wasn't so, and that dead end motivated the Union of the Physically Impaired Against Segregation (UPIAS) to rethink the nature of the struggle around disability.

A generation later, whether some people like it or not, we are in a very similar situation.

We have spent our time and

collective effort promoting anti-discrimination legislation (ADL). We have failed to develop the "social" theory of disability or to build our practice on the implications that it holds for us.

We are still turning to the State and to the establishment, and we are asking them not to oppress us. We remain in the mentality of the "pressure group", and thereby fail to develop organisations that can change an oppressive society.

The services and benefits that we receive remain predominantly rooted in a welfare system with which ADL makes no significant break.

New Labour is going to change nothing about class and privilege in this country and it offers no way forward against discrimination. Its attainment of power cannot be seen as in the interest of disabled people, nor of others who, like us, are oppressed by society.

The real challenge now is to

develop our work around the "social" definition of disability and to present an alternative policy and practice to community care and the Tory-created internal market in the help services that we need.

This, and not ADL, is what affects the lives of disabled people in the inner London borough where I work.

If we can take up, develop and apply the idea of "mainstreaming" to our organisational activities, we may avoid a whole generation of wasted effort.

Just as UPIAS put disabled people at the forefront of our struggle some 25 years ago, so Vic's article on mainstreaming does now. Our aim must be to change the society we live in and to do that we have to take a leading position on issues such as supporting monarchy or republicanism.

Dick Leaman
Independent Living Co-ordinator, Lambeth Accord

... and pull together

"Social" model? "Medical" model? Does it make a difference on the ground which society accepts? We still can't use the stairs.

We were outflanked and undermined by massive depreciations in community care support and, as Vic said, an over-obsession with navel contemplating and an unseemly scramble to get grants to carry on.

Grass roots disabled people never saw the greater picture. We shot ourselves in the foot by not convincing fellow passive and fearful disabled people that by changing or even removing the old system, a new and more suitable one would be put in its place. So most of them saw no advantage in direct challenge.

Social service systems are dependence maintenance

systems. They are the buffer, so that we are recognised as people with a problem, not as equals. Social services are in turn governed by prohibitive, political and unworkable guidelines, so that they cannot offer realistic support.

Disabled people need the courage to bite the hand that feeds us, indeed sever the whole arm. What stopped us getting equal rights on the statute book was a lack of confidence in our own ability to do that.

Also, while asking society to recognise us, we hardly recognise each other. My sector, for example, the deaf/hearing-impaired, has 70 groups with 70 differing and divisive aims. We must fight as one group, not as an incoherent rabble of confused, frightened groups.

Mervyn James
Newport, Gwent

Disappointed

I am very disappointed that you should allow such a biased and cruel review of Chicken Shed by Chris Davies (*DN April*).

A large group of people are members of Chicken Shed and a further 1,000 people are on the waiting list.

Most of them have searched to find a theatre group where it really does not matter what label society has given them, they will be accepted for themselves and their love of theatre and the performing arts.

I have three daughters, all members of the company. My youngest daughter carries the label of Downs Syndrome.

I find Chris Davies' assumption that Chicken Shed needs disabled people for its existence only to deny them equality offensive and incorrect.

Susan Hill
Hazlemere, Bucks

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DN's diary

Help for Benefits Agency

DN reader Peter Draper from Clacton-on-Sea, Essex, followed up on our diary piece about the Benefits Agency.

Remember they did not want to renew their subscription? We wondered if it was something we said, or cash problems.

Mr Draper surmised it was money. "Would they not qualify on income support grounds for a freebie?" he asked. "I'd hate to think they might miss something."



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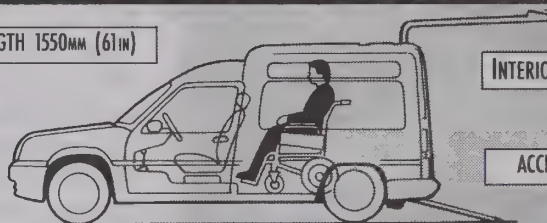
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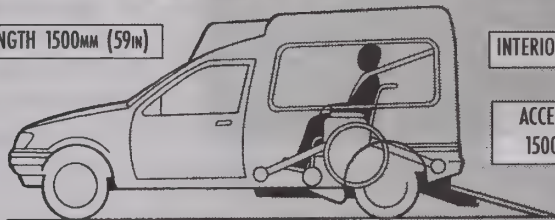


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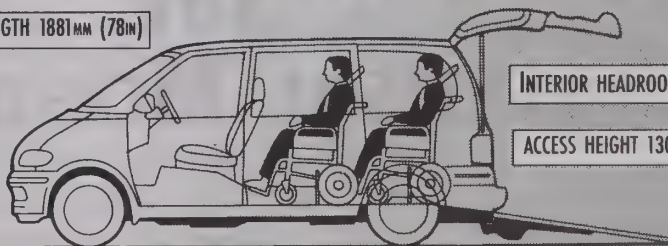


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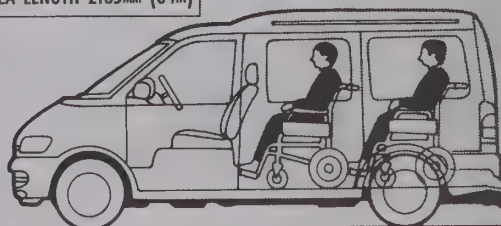


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Flower power: the Marie Curie Cancer Care garden (above) contained plants vital to the treatment of the disease. The National Asthma Campaign's Low Allergen Garden (below).



A cold spring had meant sleepless nights for exhibitors at the 1996 Chelsea Flower Show. Many had worried that their blooms would not bloom at all. But despite the forces of nature, the grounds of the Royal Hospital, Chelsea were transformed for four days in May and filled, it seemed, with every colour and aroma on earth.

The show is the most popular event in the gardener's calendar, attracting 180,000 people every year. And although we went on press day, we often could not move for hordes of camera crews and minor celebrities all vying for a piece of the action.

Anne was impressed that the press "tent" was accessible. The organisers had installed a (fairly steep) ramp up to the temporary office. Here we met landscape gardener Roddy Llewellyn, co-author of Anne's book for gardeners with disabilities *Grow it Yourself*. After a cup of tea and a look through the show catalogue, we went to see it for ourselves.

The National Asthma Campaign had installed a Low Allergen Garden. All the plants were insect pollinated, heavily scented plants were avoided and gravel was used instead of compost. Its leaflet *Why a Low Allergen Garden?* containing hints and tips was launched at the show. For a copy tel: 0171-971 0444.

Another charity represented was Help the Aged. Its garden incorporated a pagoda and a large expanse of water with a steep bank around it. There

A festival

Anne Davies is passionate about plants. So she went to the Chelsea Flower Show for the first time. As did Alison Milner.



Two for one: Anne's hobbies – cooking and gardening – were combined in

were also several steps.

Although many of the plants used required little upkeep – Ladies' Mantle, Columbine – Anne was surprised by this garden. "I don't know about the upkeep of something like this. How difficult would it be to get to the water to take weeds out?"

We asked designer Andrea Parsons what the thinking was

behind it. "It's really designed for a newly-retired couple who have lots of hobbies," she said. "Every year I have to do a garden for an elderly couple. I just wanted to get away from that slightly."

No elderly people were consulted about the design and Anne pointed out that the banner of the charity was helpful the "aged". The design did not account for the fact that as people get older, they often become less mobile. "How are people going to be able to cope with this?"

In contrast, Anne thought the *Daily Telegraph* exhibit was superb – and wheelchair accessible. This modern garden made the most of paving, water and pots. "It's level, very peaceful and colourful. It's just



The cream of strawberries: Ken Muir's towering exhibit



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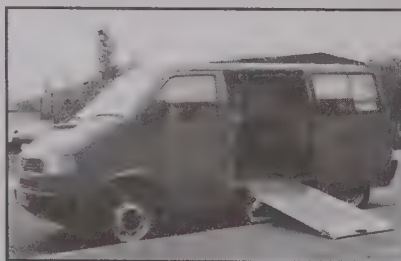
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of flowers

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ut was everything in the garden rosy?



autiful display of herbs ALISON MILLER

nned garden.”
e’s favourite garden was by Marie
ncer Care. Created to raise
of the charity’s work, it will be
a hospice after the show. Many of



h wild life: the show had everything you could want for your garden

the plants used are associated
with the prevention and
treatment of cancer.

“This garden is full of colour,”
enthused Anne. “It’s a place
where anyone could just sit and
relax and contemplate nature.”

As the showground is
temporary, wheelchair access
in general is not as good as
you would expect from a
purpose-built exhibition site.
Getting around to see the
show gardens was fairly easy.
Most of the paths were
smooth and level, but we did
have to deal with quite a few
bumpy ramps.

Anne was glad to see two
ramped toilets, “but it’s a pity
they’ve got a fixed rail. If
anyone really had to do a
lateral transfer they wouldn’t
be able to manage it.”

Two out of three restaurants
were accessible. “I would have
loved a baguette or something
like that, but there are steps
everywhere,” said Anne.

Central to the show was the
Great Marquee. This covered
three and a half acres and is

the largest of its type in the
world. Walking in was like
hitting a wall of glorious
perfume. Here was every shade
and hue imaginable from dusky
pink fuchsias to bright yellow
sunflowers. All plant life was
here: exotic giant palms and
the humble daisy.

It was impossible not to stop
at Ken Muir’s display of
strawberry plants which gave
off a mouth-watering aroma.
The plants were displayed in
towering pots, giving an idea of
what you can grow easily even
in a limited space.

There was some rubber
matting on the floor which
made access easier, but a lot of
the stands were off limits to
wheelchair users because of the
grass. “It’s alright for a short
time,” commented Anne, “but
a lot of grass is very tiring”.

All you need

Circling the marquee were
stands where you could get
everything from tools to advice
on using plants that are
attractive to wildlife. Sadly,
most of these were inaccessible
as they had been raised above
ground to allow for the weather,
and there were no ramps.

But the Gardening for the
Disabled Trust was there with a
stand displaying equipment
useful for disabled gardeners.

Wheelchair user Fred Morgan
was on hand to give advice.
Fred, a horticultural therapy
technician, was unimpressed
with access at the show. “From
what I’ve seen it’s not very
good. It seems like disability
hasn’t really been considered,”
he complained. “You can’t get
on to most of the stands and
surfacing is quite bumpy.”

One improvement on last year
was that we were able to see the
displays of hanging baskets and
window boxes. “These would
inspire any disabled gardener
to have a go,” said Anne.

There was also a display of
smaller gardens such as



Help the Aged – well, a pretty mobile, young retired couple

Marshalswick Horticultural
Society’s Edible Garden. This
fun and functional garden
contained nothing you could
not eat. Anne thought it would
be good for someone with a
disability as there was a lot
going on in a small space and
raised beds that were easy to
reach across. “It’s a garden that
you can sit and do things with.”
If you love plants and flowers

the Chelsea Flower Show is not
to be missed. Access had been
considered this year, but the
temporary nature of the site
and the sheer volume of people
made it hard going at times.

Anne thought her visit had
been worthwhile: “I’m glad I
came. I’ve enjoyed it. One or
two things could be better but
it was wonderful to be there
and see what we did see.”

n your **DN** next month

al fever: is it all sex, drugs, rock ‘n’ roll and no wheelchair
DN goes to the Phoenix festival to find out.

nd about: more fun days out for all the family.

ocus: Blackpool (right), northern England’s holiday haven.
Does it have to offer people with disabilities?

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Disability NOW

Putting the vision into telly

TV has improved in the last decade, but there's still a long way to go, says Chris Davies

In 1986 I wrote an article for *DN* with comments from tv luminaries, such as Jeremy Isaacs at Channel 4. At the time I was working for Scope and it was common knowledge that I was a couch potato.

In July my column proper began with a not-too-complimentary comment on a Yorkshire tv programme called *Where There's Life*. 363 reviews and ten years later, here I am.

Has the representation of disabled people on tv improved?

Disabled people still have the same, main, complaint: we are not on screen enough.

But for me, quantity is not as simple as it once was. Rarely have I found it hard to find enough programmes. It's just that some programmes take disabled people into account and others don't.

Disability is most often shown in factual broadcasting, and you find least disabled people in drama and comedy series.

This does not equate with good or bad portrayal. An episode of the comedy series *2.4 Children*, featuring Mik Scarlet, treated disability really well. And there have been many bad documentaries like *The Visit*, which have done nothing but harm.

If quantity needs to be increased in some areas, quality must be improved everywhere.



Golden glories: *Eldorado* people with Julie Fernandez (Nessa)

What's their verdict?

Ian McRae has been with the BBC Disability Programmes Unit (DPU) since it started in 1992, and is now editor. What does he think of the last decade?

"The general profile of disabled people on tv is distinct: they don't really exist. And when they do, it is in a very inappropriate and often negative way."

For him, the highlights have been, justifiably, two DPU programmes: *From the Edge*

and *Over the Edge*. The latter in particular has done a lot to promote disability comedy.

Outside disability programmes, there are examples like *Skallagrigg*, which was good because, faced with a lack of disabled actors, the producers used disabled amateurs.

Sylvia Hines, who commissions programmes such as *Inside Out* and *Sign On* for Channel 4, has a more positive view. "Things are moving on.

There is a real interest about how to get disabled people more fully involved in all aspects of tv.

"But we have to recognise that this is a very competitive era, and all ideas have to have energy, wit and originality. Too often, disability is just seen as a worthy area, by producers and disabled people alike."

Link producer Ian Cook, said: "I think there has been a gradual change in attitudes towards disabled people and you can see this reflected in language."

He singled out *Four Weddings and a Funeral*, "a pleasant surprise in that a deaf character was included. I can't remember it being central to the story — he was just there — and I think that was a nice touch."

A lesson to be learned?

The trouble is that most general programmes are still made by non-disabled people.

Is there one lesson which still needs to be learnt by non-disabled programme makers?

Ian McRae said: "They must suspend and challenge their assumptions about how they want to present and portray disabled people. For example, the producers of game shows need to question whether their set is accessible, the game is accessible, how the disabled contestant is treated on the show, etc."

Ian Cook said: "Approach the subject with an open mind. Remember the best way to find out about disability is to go and meet disabled people."

Specialist programmes

Probably the most constant theme in my reviews is the outstanding work done by specialist programming. But I wonder if in ten years' time they will be necessary.

Sylvia Hines thought *Inside Out* speaks to a general audience about society from the perspective of disabled people, while *Sign On* is targeted to a specific community. "I expect the new era of digital broadcasting will offer far more opportunities for many communities to have their own programmes."

Link's Ian Cook said "People are becoming disabled all the time and need information, advice and encouragement to overcome discrimination. Specialist programmes can often deal with disability issues in greater depth and with greater expertise."

Ian McRae said: "Even if we end up living in a fully integrated utopia, these programmes will still be valid because the experience of disability is a unique one which needs to be reflected."

He quoted some surveys about how disabled people want to be seen on tv — not heroes in the *Ironside* mould, just as everyday people.

Ten year wish list

I've enjoyed the last ten years. Despite *Hearts of Gold*, *Children of Courage* and ITV *Telethon*, the early excruciating coverage of disability sport and numerous other tv crimes, there have been some good things. *Eldorado* wasn't a masterpiece but it made a better job of portraying an ordinary disabled person than any tv drama before or since.

People in the industry have learnt a lot, but there is still a lot to learn.

When disabled people rise to positions of influence, there will obviously be a major change. Until then, non-disabled programme makers should regularly tap the views of disabled people about tv. And more disabled people must explore "positive" portrayal, so they can advise about what should be done and less about what shouldn't.

Ten years from now, there have to be more disabled people employed by tv, not just as consultants — often an easy way of marginalising the issues. (Still, it's a useful first step.)

Mainstream programming should be integrating disability imaginatively. We are not, emphatically, "worthy".

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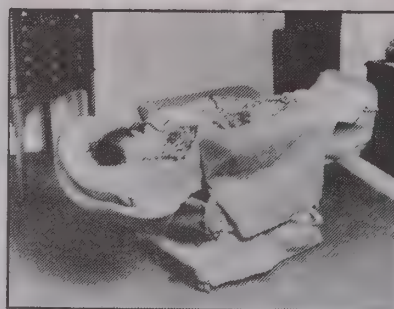
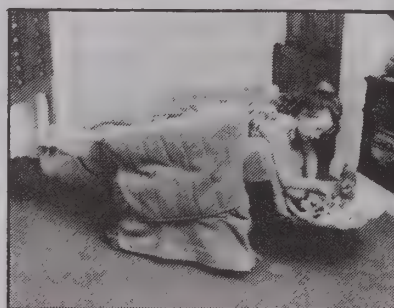
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Art

Last impressions

Television

Chris Davies

Degas is mainly known for his paintings shown with other artists of the Impressionist movement of the 1860s and 70s. These are mostly pictures of women – laundresses, girls dancing, at the café, racetrack or opera. The exhibition at the National Gallery (until 26 August) has, for the first time, assembled 90 later works.

From the age of fifty Degas' health declined and his eyesight deteriorated. Over the same period he appears to have withdrawn from the world, spending more and more time in his darkened studio. In visiting the exhibition I was interested to see how his work had developed during this time.

First it is clear that he lost none of his powers as a painter. Renoir regards this as the time when Degas really found himself. Reviewers have greeted the show with great enthusiasm. So it seems strange that the work should be so little known. Perhaps his blindness had more impact on his reputation than his work.

The exhibition is hung to show us his working method. He takes as his subject either dancers in one of about three positions, or a woman bending over washing or drying herself. While the pictures originate from a life model, they are mostly reworkings of his own



As his sight deteriorated, Degas lost none of his powers as a painter

drawings. We see series of work in either chalk and charcoal or pastel on tracing paper.

The later the work, the stronger the impression that Degas has no interest whatever in his subject but is almost ritualistically reworking the same few compositions.

As his clarity of vision fades the shapes become simpler and the colours more intense, almost

taking on a life of their own.

What is fascinating is that it is not clear what he is getting at. In some ways the works appear almost like stills from an experimental animation. In others he seems to be playing with the effect of colour by varying colours within basically the same composition.

Many people and, I confess, myself amongst them, feel

uneasy with the artist's apparent obsession for intimate studies of women and girls. But with these works it seems of little relevance. The subjects are not as important as the pictures themselves, and this is perhaps the key since the drawings taken as a whole clearly show an artist absorbed by his art.

Adam Reynolds

Film

Michael Turner

In recent years *Sesame Street* has tried to promote positive images for disabled children, but the Muppets' latest big screen venture, *Treasure Island*, throws all that firmly overboard.

Long John Silver (Tim Curry) is relatively innocuous, characterised as much by his Sid James-like laugh as his disability. But the film really succeeds in being offensive in its portrayal of Blind Pugh as a stumbling buffoon.

Pugh crashes around an inn, talks to a mounted moose-head, mistakes Jim Hawkins for a girl and smells burning as the inn goes up in flames.

Just to make sure that we are injured and insulted, we are also treated to snide comments on political correctness and "visually challenged Pugh".

The inescapable message for children here is that it is acceptable to ridicule disability.



For a change in pace and just about everything else, *Things to do in Denver when you're dead* is destined for cult status.

Jimmy the Saint (Andy Garcia) is an ex-gangster trying to go straight, but is called back to do one last job for his old boss, know as the Man with the Plan (Christopher Walken), who is paralysed and presides over a declining empire.

Disability is used to reflect the character's impotence, but this is more than made up for by



Muppets: negative images

Walken in a superb performance. He easily steals the show and portrays a man who is evil and corrupt despite his disability, not because of it.

This film contains a lot of gruesome violence, but it is ultimately moving and humane.

Exhibition

Tap, Ruffle and Shave

Advertised as an "installation to meddle with" by Richard Lazell, this is an exhibition not to be missed. There's still time to visit this exciting free event at the South Bank Royal Festival Hall, London (until 7 July). It may go to other venues in the UK and certainly deserves to.

Much intense, practical research lies behind it. You can blend enjoyment and involvement without effort. I went around twice, once with the helpful guide who explained things I could not "see" and once on my own.

The items produced different responses from my senses each time and the large space in the Festival Hall ballroom showed everything to its best advantage.

There is access for wheelchair users. Photographs, a video, print and braille labels are around to describe each piece. I pointed out that the printed labels were rather small and this was noted.

Richard Lazell was available for discussion about the ideas behind the show. This was rivetting, descriptive and showed that he knows the true value of shared sensory perception for everyone.

Among the amazing delights, the three lovely sculptures made by blind Japanese students were an outstanding "touch" for me. Close by stood three pianos. Each had their own "voices" when played, including a mute one with vibrating canes on top.

Gioya Steinke

Video top five

1. **GOLDENEYE** (MGM): 007's still shaken, but not stirred.
2. **CRIMSON TIDE** (Hollywood): Underwater intrigue with Denzel Washington.
3. **FRENCH KISS** (Polygram): Romantic comedy comes home.
4. **THE NET** (Columbia): High tech thriller.
5. **MURDER IN THE FIRST** (Fox Guild): Alcatraz drama.

Chart supplied by MIRB

One style of programme I haven't given much space to in the past is that associated with charities.



Tv has listened to the disability movement to the extent that programme makers are more careful about how they represent disabled people, but it still pays tribute to charitable giving.

In the past, Children's BBC encouraged its viewers to vote for the *SOS Star Awards*, one of which was for someone who had "overcome" (or helped others "overcome") disability. Now this has been taken over by Comic Relief, as the *Red Nose Awards* (BBC1, 27 May).

One award is called "The Honorary Hooter" and nominally goes to those who do exceptional work on behalf of others. Last year the first of them went to Lenny Henry, and I was fooled into thinking the award was okay. He is, after all, politically correct.

This year it went to the *Blue Peter* programme for its annual appeals, and finally the penny dropped. This award encourages young people to celebrate charity. *Blue Peter* has often belittled disabled people through its fundraising.

Comic Relief might be better than most in the way it fundraises, but it should certainly think about changing the criteria for this award. But the same programme did announce the winners of a competition asking schools to send in campaigning videos. One of the winners was about access in schools. Talk about facing both directions at once!

Mainstream programmes being sparse this month, I regretfully must comment about a programme which most of you will not see because it is only screened in the London area. Made by the Carlton tv Community Programmes Unit, *Everyday Lives* is a series of single documentaries.

In *Natalie, Stephen and Me* (ITV, 14 May), Margaret Botell told how she had adopted two disabled children. This was a very happy programme, full of affection and positive thinking. If only other programme makers could look at disability this way instead of reinforcing the stereotypes of tragedy.

Incidentally, if you have a local programme that has stories about disability that I might not see, write to DN and we'll make sure I get to see it.

MOBILITY

Changes for the better

Rob Jackson reports

New ways in which disabled people receive services will change the focus of Naidex for the better – as persuasion never could.

An enabling Act last November allows social services departments to make direct payments to disabled people in lieu of services (it would be logical to extend this to the purchase of equipment too). And earlier this year the Government announced a voucher scheme for wheelchairs, similar to the pilot scheme for nursery school places.

For the first time there is a real possibility of private buyers exerting market clout. Naidex; and the manufacturers who exhibit there, will have to cater for disabled people who will be spending their own money on equipment of their own choice.

Change was apparent at the National Exhibition Centre (NEC), Birmingham, in May. The aisles had been widened to a wheelchair friendly 4 metres, and information and advice organisations, encouraged by free space for the first time, provided a service aimed at disabled people, their families and supporters.

Symbols of a new age?

Two products reflected this changing focus: a beautiful manual wheelchair called Slam'R, and the latest power chair from Invacare.



Slam'R, imported from California by Wheelchair Technology of Northallerton, stole the show. It's a long time since I have seen Naidex visitors almost drooling over a new manual wheelchair, but it's a long time since a really revolutionary design was so brilliantly combined with such stunning good looks. "It'd make you feel better just to sit

in one of those," an admirer commented, "like a new car only better."

The name Slam'R derives from an American slang word for sports wheelchair seat. It is a genuinely multi-purpose chair. The "Slam" is adjustable through eight positions to raise or lower the centre of gravity so that the same chair can be used for work and play.

The wheel camber is adjustable in 4 degree bites; there are eight positions for the rear stub axles to adjust balance, and the track can be narrowed or widened for different degrees of stability. The front castors are interchangeable for different uses and adjustable for height.

The revolutionary bit is that the adjustments can be made in seconds – no tools, just fingers using minimal pressure.

The importers apologise for charging £1,785, but point out that if more people could afford it, the price would come down. In view of its versatility, Slam'R will be an attractive way to spend your wheelchair voucher – when it arrives. Tel: (01609) 772374.

If Meyra makes the Rolls-Royce of outdoor power wheelchairs, the new Storm from Invacare is the GTi.

An outdoor chair, it is incredibly compact, so has indoor/outdoor possibilities for lots of people. Independent suspension all round and real power and acceleration from two 210 watt motors.

Storm is going to get some



POST STUDIOS PHOTOGRAPHIC

Two New Age wheelchairs: the outdoor Storm from Invacare (left) and, from California, the multi-purpose Slam'R (above) "like a new car, only better"

people well off the beaten track. Invacare should sponsor a "first Storm to the top of Ben Nevis unassisted" contest.

It is also capable of sedate, precise handling in small spaces. The Action Control System, which can be fully programmed, ensures that top speed, acceleration and response time can be customised to suit all conditions. Depending on accessories and upholstery, Storm costs £3,330-£4,500. Tel: (01656) 647327.

Narrow transfer

Stairmatic from Baronmead International in Bognor Regis, Sussex, is a transit chair with an ingenious battery-powered

stair-climbing facility. Not seen at Naidex for five years, it answers so many problems that it deserves a mention. The Stairmatic has a compact design, will stand in a 21in square when not in use, has a built-in battery charger and over-kill safety features.

It is nice to find a manufacturer who recognises that stairs, not disabled people are the problem. Of course, there is no substitute for designed-in accessibility, but while steps remain to exclude wheelchair users, Stairmatic will be a useful compromise.

It is narrow enough to fit down the central aisle of an airline or railway coach and will climb easily in and out of a mini-bus or other stepped access vehicles. Robust steel bars are conveniently located to assist clamping with standard Unwin-type clamps.

It will carry up to 18 stones and the 12 volt battery will allow it to climb 1,000 steps on a single charging. £2,900. Tel: (01243) 586692.

Rob Jackson is director of the Derbyshire Centre for Integrated Living (DCIL).

NAIDEX in '97

Naidex is moving its annual national exhibition from Wembley to Birmingham's NEC (May 13-17). Regional events, called "Independent Living", will be at Bristol, Doncaster, Glasgow and Sandown Park.

MICROTECH

Controls for living

By David Guy

Suppliers of microtechnology aids stayed away in droves from this year's Midlands Naidex. But remote controls for two environmental control systems caught my eye.

Possum showed their new Compact, a 32-function, infra-red remote with three input modes to suit the user's ability. The Compact allows you to open doors, operate telephones, control the tv, video, hi-fi, etc. Powered by a rechargeable battery, it comes with the battery charger.

It can "learn" the infra-red signals from other remote controls (such as your tv or video) and is available with a range of mountings. Possum engineers will programme the functions to individual requirements. Tel: (01296) 81591.

Hugh Steeper displayed the Fox radio remote control with 12 selections on the standard display. This may be programmed to give up to 40 selections (each selection can control many functions) plus ten stored telephone numbers.

Simplified versions with four or six options are also on offer.

The Fox can be programmed by Steeper to allow remote control of electrical appliances, telephone, intercom systems, etc. The remote is easy to learn and use with a range of input switches on a number of different mountings, such as wheelchair, bed or stand.

Hugh Steeper's Persona has had a few enhancements and is now available "on prescription" to disabled people in the UK meeting Health Department criteria – as are the others. Tel: 0181-788 8165.

The CD-ROM version of the Disabled Living Foundation's database is now £350 a year, with quarterly updates (from £500). Tel: 0171-289 6111.

David Guy is centre manager at DCIL and provides IT consultancy services to other groups.



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flexible chairs and tables

ways hope to see something which will solve a difficulty and meet the needs of a child and their family. But more than it is improvements to existing products that I find, as manufacturers juggle with the



in nice-to-touch Microcare

CHILDREN

by Anne Harris

priorities of child, parent, therapist and purchasing authority.

Tendercare (Hampshire Medical Development) was demonstrating the new Fold-a-Way postural control. In two sizes, it would suit children with moderate postural problems and help bridge the gap between baby buggies and supportive seating in wheelchairs.

The seat position can be readily adjusted to cater for the child if he needs to sleep or eat. The chair folds easily with all the pads in place. All covers are washable and there are various extras including shopping basket, rainhood and apron. Tel: (01794) 511555.

As more disabled children are

integrating into nurseries, it was good to see that G&S Smirthwaite have included in their nursery furniture a slatted top table, so that the child who needs to grasp in order to play and be active can use the same style furniture as their peers. £64.

The school chairs to match have a "curver" version, which has side hand-holes built into the design for a child who needs to grasp the edge of the chair for extra stability and confidence. £51-£61.

Their most welcome development is a larger size pot for junior aged children with built-in splashguard, based on the standard toddler pot. £18, or in the Birchwood Potty Chair for about £130. Tel: (01626) 835552.

There were several indoor seating systems with trays on show. The Star from JCM Seating Solutions had various



Table talk: Laura Dillon (left), Lucy Knifton and Geoff Smirthwaite

options to help control posture, including a tilt-in-space facility to meet the needs of children with a wide range of sitting abilities.

The chair is covered in Microcare, a breathable, washable and anti-bacterial fabric, nice to touch.

The system can be used on the floor or on an office chair base. This gives variable height, from dining-table down to almost floor level, and mobility around rooms, allowing the child to practise the important skill of moving from sitting to standing, so necessary as the child grows and becomes heavier to lift.

The moveable footrest would be a safer option, although it is said the child can stand on the footrest.

Fully adjustable and available in two sizes for one to eight

years. £240-265 for the basic model. Tel: (01775) 766664.

Taylor Therapy's new seating system, Expression, is similar and comes in four sizes. It has a variable height facility, but not down to floor level, as it tilts to give a forward leaning position for those with very limited sitting skills.

There is also a forward leaning position in the SAM (seating and mobility system), which can be motorized and controlled by various switches. It is simple to place the child on the saddle shaped seat and adjust the well designed pelvis and trunk supports. Being well supported, the child can use his hands to gain driving skills and mobility. Tel: (01922) 27601.

Anne Harris is occupational therapist at Scope's Rutland House School.

IN THE HOME

Beginning to count

by Julie O'Keeffe

me, too, it was variations on a theme rather than true innovations. But I was encouraged to find companies presenting products not yet launched for which they wanted the views of users and therapists. The Easyturn Key Company says on its No Squint Door Viewers' literature that they eagerly wish to have your opinion on its benefits and applications, as well as any possible drawbacks".

This security spy hole gives you a wide angle view of what is going on outside your front door without having to squint. It can be used on doors 16mm-25mm thick and comes with fitting instructions and self-adhesive template. No wires or batteries. £19.94 incl p&p and VAT. Tel: (01395) 222588.

Chiltern Medical Development was also finding out what people thought about colour in overhead ceiling racks, hoist motor units and mobile hoists. The plan is to have them in red, green, blue or yellow. For a small extra cost, it will give more choice.

Chiltern is also developing a powered turntable track operated by the user. Besides increasing independence, it reduces the risk of back injury to the carer.

Chiltern also had a "concept" power cubicle on a raised, square "tiled" deck/base with

troughs in between the tiles so that water can drain away on a level floor. The 25mm high base allows a shallower ramp and there are clear side panels and no sharp corners. The whole thing looks like any shower unit. About £1,545 for cubicle, soap dish, grab rail and a choice of electric, mixer or power shower.

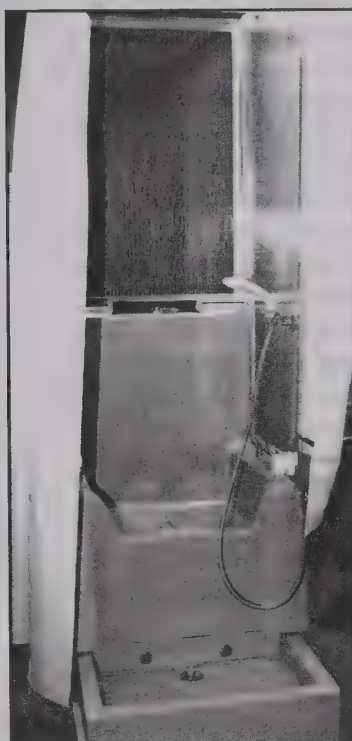
Another development is a wet floor area for a shower which by-passes the need to dig up the floor in favour of above-floor drainage using a slope, a trough and a concealed pipe. No price yet. Tel: (01869) 246470.

Roger Jones and Sons have solved the problem of a large step on a raised floor shower by having two low rise, gradual steps on their Raglan base unit. It has conventional bath dimensions but can be cut to size. Pastel colours and matching shower curtains.

Their walk-in Bath Cascade combines sit-down bath, foot bath and sit-down shower. The water cascades over your shoulders and collects in the seat unit to overflow into the foot bath. For a catalogue, freephone (0800) 387344.

A simple idea from Eastbourne Showers is the Pull-Push Handle that enables people with grip problems or heavy shopping bags to open a door. The handle is quite large and round and only needs a light pull or push - or even an elbow nudge. In a wide range of finishes, £99.50 plus £7.50 carriage and VAT. Tel: (01323) 756875.

The Neater Eater, a manually operated feeding system for people who cannot feed themselves, comes in three versions for different disabilities. The latest optional extra is a



Bath Cascade: let the water flow

sandwich holder that can also hold pizza, biscuits, etc. £17 plus p&p. Michaelis Engineering, tel: (01298) 23882.

Smith & Nephew Homecraft have added some attractive plates and mugs to their range. The plates are square with deep sides, so food cannot be pushed off so easily, and have a broad horizontal rim for easier carrying. Matching mugs with a wide base, "waisted" neck and turned out lip, come with one or two large handles, or as a beaker with no handles. In plain cream with a red trim or a floral design, suitable for the microwave, dishwasher or hot food cabinet. The ceramic is said to retain the heat so would be suitable for people who eat slowly. Plate from £8.69, mug from £5.67. Tel: (01623) 757955.

Julie O'Keeffe is deputy head of data services at the Disabled Living Foundation.

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A mini building society

Trevor Kent and his sons had a good day out at the new Legoland in Windsor – in the first of our out and about features

You've either got the patience to build weird and wonderful things from little plastic bricks which stick together or you haven't. I haven't.

Nevertheless, I must admit a recent trip to the newly-opened Legoland in Windsor was better than I had expected. More excited than I were sons Leicester, eight, and Warwick, 13, who has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. Less enthusiastic was Lincoln, 14,

who felt he had "done everything".

He was right. Legoland wasn't really for him, but he put a brave face on it. I would have been very upset if he hadn't, had I paid the normal entrance charge of £50.

As it happens, we were all the guests of Legoland at its pre-opening press launch, where we all had a jolly good day.

The experience begins as you sweep up the long private road

– lego models struggling to construct the word "welcome" on the roadside letter by letter. The welcome continues at the large car park with tons of orange badge spaces right by the entrance.

Thoughtfully, toilets are provided even before you go to the pay desks. Once through the shiny steel turnstiles (one of the few things not made of lego) we were greeted by a panoramic hilltop view of the surrounding glorious countryside, with Windsor Castle in all its splendour in the middle distance.

However there was the catch. Panoramic views spell hills, and there are plenty at Legoland. While a little railway does take you down to the centre of the park (wheelchair compartments are available), it's still a fair old push almost everywhere.

There's plenty to do. Nothing is too taxing and there's certainly nothing to whiten the childrens' knuckles – but to be

fair, the burghers of Legoland do say in their publicity that this is a family day out, mainly for adults and younger children. Leicester made straight for the very good adventure playground and then we all tried the log flume which plies through pirate-infested

but the lift out was more difficult, especially with a few extra pounds of wet clothing.

The Ferris Wheel had a compartment with extra wide doors and steel wire restraints for the wheelchair, and the rest of us could ride with Warwick – a thoughtful touch this. Then on to the I-spy Express for a ride round the lower park. Here again there are wheel-on compartments in each carriage and giant black bricks for coal. Very popular, but out of the question for Warwick, were the individual self-drive electric cars at Lego Traffic. Good too was the boat ride close by – naturally a very difficult lift in and out, but worth it as Warwick could actually pilot the craft himself. For a moment I worried about the accelerator pedal until I was told it was just for decoration.

There are a number of live shows to catch during the day and we all enjoyed the rough and tumble antics of a professional troupe of actor/gymnasts who got very wet in the harbour. After all this excitement and water it was time for the adapted loos. They are not oversized, but adequate, if a little dark. Thoughtfully, there were emergency buttons, but two

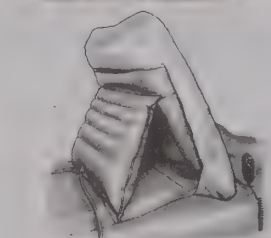


Warwick (left) and Trevor take a break with a couple of new friends

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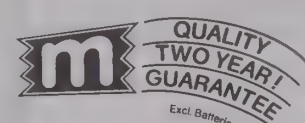


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areas have no loos at all.

While there we met Lego staff member Rachel with 12-year-old Mark Higgins who is blind. She helped him feel the exhibits and described them to him. Mum and dad, Barbara and Brian Higgins, told me they had phoned first and said it was Mark's birthday and the tactile tour was arranged.

So, on balance, well done Lego, but how about a reduction in entrance charges for disabled people and carers like other parks?

Legoland is open until 27 October and costs £15 for adults, £12 for children and £11 for OAPs. Advance booking will save £1 each, but not on Sundays and bank holidays.

Legoland, Windsor, Berkshire, tel: (01753) 626364.

Deep deep down

If you're looking for adventure, why not be daring and learn to dive? Hannah Crabtree checks out the Scuba Trust in Dorking.

Do you want to be under the sea? Silice Karito does, and the Scuba Trust is helping turn his dream into reality.

Silice first got interested in diving when his friend sent him underwater photographs she had taken whilst scuba diving in Australia. "I looked at the pictures and thought I'd like to try that", he says.

accessible swimming pool in Dorking.

Trust administrator Leon Golding says: "The sessions offer people with disabilities a chance to try out diving and see if it's the sport for them.

"If they like it, they can come back and have further lessons that will allow them to go diving in the sea."

underwater took a little getting used to. But the water allows me so much movement, I get a real sense of freedom.

"They also have seashuttles which pull you if it's too hard on your arms. I start my sports diver training in July. I'm really looking forward to diving in the sea and seeing all the marine life."

The Trust was set up in March by a group of diving enthusiasts and instructors who wanted to give people with disabilities the chance to try snorkelling and scuba diving.

"Although a lot of people prefer diving abroad, there are things to see in this country," says Leon Golding

"Wreck diving is good for visually impaired people, as wrecks are very tactile and you can feel your way along."

When you've trained here with the Trust, you are then ready for foreign shores.

Tommy Burton has just returned from a diving trip in Egypt. Although an experienced diver, Tommy gave up as a regional coach with the British Sub Aqua Club when he was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis.

"I got involved with the Trust



Testing the waters: Silice takes a dive

just recently. One of their instructors, who also has MS, suggested the holiday and said it would be good. He was one hundred per cent right.

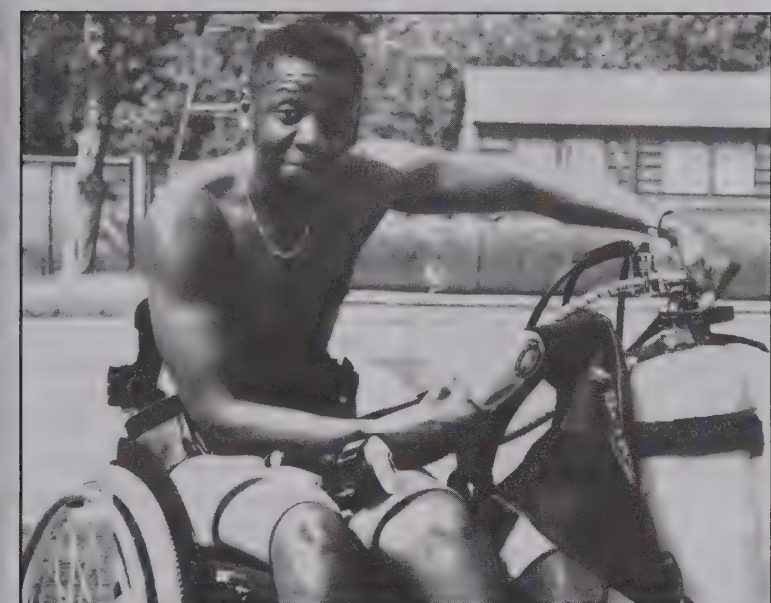
"The instructors are used to teaching people with all kinds of disabilities. They spend a lot of time with you and cater for everybody who gets involved."

So if you want a day out with a difference why not give the Scuba Trust a try? But watch

out, scuba diving can very quickly change from a pastime into a passion.

For more information, contact Leon Golding, The Scuba Trust, 'Uplands', Reigate Road, Dorking, Surrey RH4 1QE, tel: (01306) 740349.

Wheeling Around the Algarve also arranges foreign Scuba diving holidays, tel: 00 351 89 399844/5.



All kitted out: Silice gets ready to take the plunge

He heard about the Scuba Trust from a friend and went on his first dive a month ago.

The Trust organises "Come and Try a Dive" sessions in an

If diving seems a little daunting, the Trust also offers snorkelling lessons.

After his first dive Silice was instantly hooked. "Breathing

Out and about in July

25th Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender Pride March and Festival, 6 July, beginning Hyde Park, ending on Clapham Common. Special viewing area for disabled people and sign language interpreters. For details contact The Pride Trust, Suite 28, Eurolink Centre, 49 Effra Road, London SW2 1BZ, tel: 0171-737 6903.

Royal Academy of Arts, 228th Summer Exhibition. Special day for disabled visitors on 8 July. Free entry. For details contact Brenda Evans, tel: 0171-494 5681.

British Grand Prix motor racing, 12-14 July. There are a limited amount of tickets available for ramped, raised areas close to disabled toilets. £65 adult, £10 child. For more information contact Silverstone Circuits, Towcester, Northamptonshire NN12 8TN.

Galway Arts Festival, Galway, Irish Republic, celebrates its 18th anniversary, 17-28 July. For more information call: 00 353 915 61516.

Countryside Awareness Day, 17 July, Macclesfield, Cheshire. Contact Helen Forshaw, Bollin Valley Project, Country Offices, Chapel Lane, Wilmslow SK9 1PU, tel: (01625) 534790.

Useful publications: *Discovering Wildlife*, a directory of wildlife and countryside sites suitable for people with a disability. £12.50 incl p&p. Send cheques made payable to The Sensory Trust, to the Chief Executive, Sensory Trust, 52 Chancellor House, Mount Ephraim, Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 8BT.

The National Trust publishes *Information for Visitors with Disabilities*, free with SAE, from The National Trust, Dept DN, 36 Queen Anne's Gate, London SW1H 9AS, tel: 0171-222 9251.

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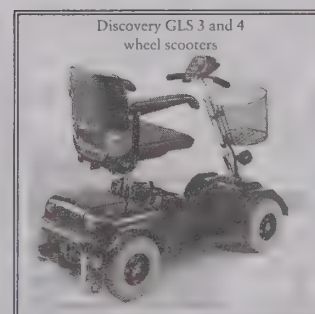
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Fancy footwear: Jean Ashcroft in search of the perfect fit

It's summer and time to put your best foot forward. But what will yours be wearing? If you are unable to fit into "regular" sizes, finding attractive summer shoes can be a real chore.

So is there a solution? Jean Ashcroft from Arthritis Care thinks there is. Fed up with having ugly surgical shoes sitting in the back of her wardrobe, she wants the NHS to put more funds into chiropody and footwear.

"Getting it right in the beginning saves money in the long-term," she says. "If chiropody was more available, fewer people would need operations for foot problems that have gone untreated."

"Getting shoes from the NHS can be a long and laborious task. First, you need a hospital referral. This often means waiting for a visiting technician to fit you into their schedule."

"When the referral comes, the choice of shoes is very

Steppin' out

Hannah Crabtree talks to Jean Ashcroft about finding summer shoes that are cool, comfortable and really fit

restricted. If you want a colour other than black or brown it is frowned upon. A friend of mine was told off because she dyed her shoes red. I can't see how that altered their function!

"Children's shoes now come in brighter colours, why should that change for adults? Also, you are only allowed one pair. This means that you have to wear the same shoes for gardening as you would to a wedding."

Jean prefers to wear trainers rather than surgical shoes, and eventually persuaded her local hospital to pay for them.

"£60 on a pair of trainers is much better than £300 on shoes that I will never wear."

"Arthritis Care recommends trainers, as they have shock absorbing soles. Even our older members are now quite happy to wear them."

"I prefer the ones with velcro fastenings, but they are quite difficult to find in adult sizes."

If you are searching for the right shoe, Jean's advice is to fight for what you want. "There are ways around the system if you know how to work it. The NHS needs to put more resources into footwear and care."

If you want something cooler, why not go for sandals? Jean finds the ones with cork soles that are shaped to the foot most suitable for her needs.

She says, "Brands such as Clarks, Ecco and Rohde are good, as they are wide-fitting, have decent arch support, shock absorption and have soft uppers that mould to the foot."

If you're having difficulty finding a shoe that fits from the

tel: 0121-475 1101 make an orthopaedic sandal.

If you're looking for the perfect fit, custom-made shoes could be the answer.

Shoemakers such as Bill Bird, tel: (01386) 700855 make high quality shoes to suit you. Alan James Raddon's "Shandals", tel: (01545) 570904 are comfortable, cool and very good for people with bunions.

But be warned, custom made shoes are usually expensive and can take a long time to arrive.

So if you're thinking of stepping out this summer, you do have a choice. It's just a matter of finding the shoe (and shoemaker) that fits your style.



Cool and comfy: JD Williams "arcopdico" in natural and white

high street, some mail order companies may offer a greater variety. Cosyfeet, tel: (01458) 445988 have a range of sandals that not only come in red but gold and silver too. Rolli Moden, tel: (01304) 620445 have both men's and women's sandals and JD Williams, tel: 0161-238 2000 have put together a Shoe Tailor catalogue, with sandals and shoes that are available in wide fittings and a variety of sizes.

For kids who need greater foot support, Salt and Son, tel: 0171-436 4582 and Ken Hall, tel: (01536) 516674 make open toed boots with adjustable straps and Gilbert and Mellish,

Arthritis Care have an information sheet on footwear, tel: 0171-916 1500.

The Arthritis and Rheumatism Council have a leaflet Choosing Shoes, tel: (01246) 558033.

The Disabled Living Foundation can answer queries on footwear by letter or fax at: 380-384 Harrow Road, London W9 2HU, fax: 0171-266 2922.



Super sandal: Alan James Raddon's lace-up "Shandal"

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A warm welcome awaits all our guests old and new

Your stars

By *DN's*
astrologer
Marion
Stanton



★ **CANCER** (23 June-23 July)
You may experience conflict at the start of the month as the full moon opposes your sign. Talk things through and make the most of the energy you'll get from the 24th onwards.

★ **LEO** (24 July-23 August)
The second half of the month is better for talking. A female relative could be of help around mid-month. Listen to her advice.

★ **VIRGO** (24 August-23 Sept)
If you took on board advice last month you should reap some rewards as you begin to turn ideas into reality. Treat romantic encounters with caution.

★ **LIBRA** (24 Sept-23 Oct)
If you are feeling stuck over a problem this month, turn your attention to other matters as this won't be easily resolved. Talk to a friend about it after the 22nd.

★ **SCORPIO** (24 Oct-22 Nov)
This could be a month to start to get to grips with what you need in order to to develop work opportunities. You are likely to face challenges but, if you argue your case well, you could be in for career development.

★ **SAGITTARIUS** (23 Nov-21 Dec)
There could still be tension in close relationships, but you should be in a better position to clear the air this month. Stop brooding and start talking.

★ **CAPRICORN** (22 Dec-20 Jan)
A conflict of interests could arise over a personal issue. Don't try and make decisions mid-month as you may have your priorities mixed up. Wait a little and some light will appear.

★ **AQUARIUS** (21 Jan-19 Feb)
There is more time than you think to further a project that seems pressing. A bit more thought is likely to bring success, so take the time to get it right.

★ **PISCES** (20 Feb-20 March)
Tension in your love life could come to a head this month. If the relationship is on a firm footing, you'll see it through. Not a good time to make long term plans.

★ **ARIES** (21 March-20 April)
You won't find it so easy to talk your way out of a tight spot this month. Be honest and hope others understand. Think about creating more structure in your life.

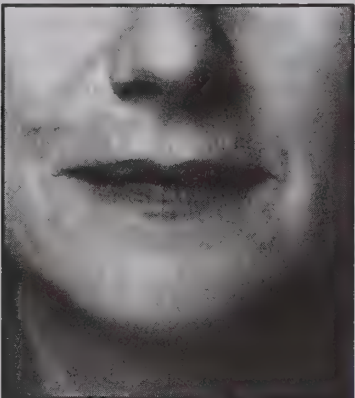
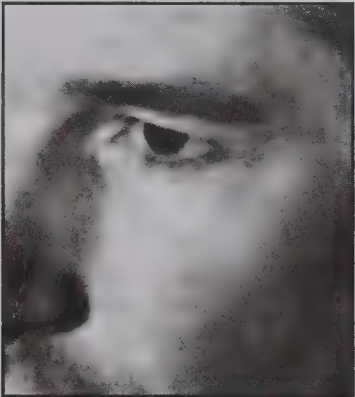
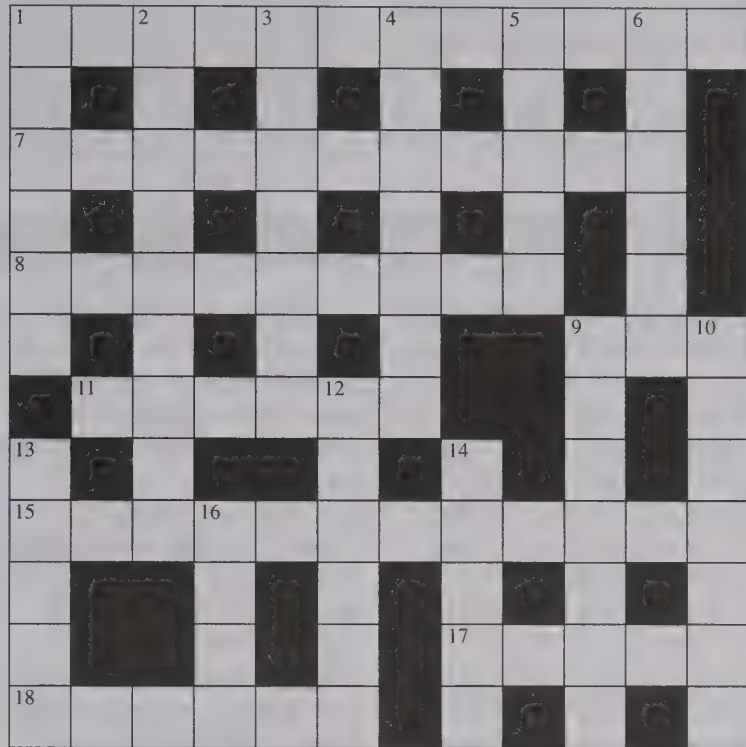
★ **TAURUS** (21 April-21 March)
Watch what you say as you might not mean it to come out quite the way it sounds. Beware of being bossy with loved ones. They too have opinions!

★ **GEMINI** (22 May-22 June)
Venus starts to move forward in your sign and your love life could take a turn for the better. Hold your head high and start to believe in your relationships.

DN's crossword

Answers on page 29

COMPILED BY REBECCA REYNOLDS



Whose face
is it anyway?

Answers on page 29



ACROSS

1. Type of 7 across (7,5)
7. Aim tidy boil (anag)
8. Meagre net (anag)
9. Little devil (3)
11. Lack of movement (6)
15. Keen ramp grit (anag)
17. Russian statesman (5)
18. Type of drum or household implement (6)

DOWN

1. Antipodean animal (6)
2. Trail bore (anag)
3. Disease (7)
4. Picks up or infers (7)
5. Cook in oven (5)



Create-a-caption winner

Congratulations to P L Court from Eastbourne who thinks Shorne Wood park ranger Mark Read (*right*) and green man sculptor Steve Portchmouth are saying "Meet our friend Woody Allen." £10 is on its way. Thanks to all who entered.

6. Person in touch with the dead? (6)
9. Tiny period of time (7)
10. Tipping down (7)
12. Having a biological origin (6)
13. Thrash (5)
14. Grin (5)
16. English county (4)

Trivia teasers

Answers on page 29

1. Which king commanded the Brits at the Battle of Agincourt?
2. What is the name of Disney's European theme park? (Win a trip there on page 31.)

3. Which Shakespearean magician is said by some to be based on the bard himself?
4. Who presents the tv quiz *Have I Got News for You*?
5. Which actress is tennis champ Andre Agassi engaged to?
6. Which bird is on Australia's coat of arms?
7. Name *The Magic Roundabout's* cow.
8. Which organ of the body is affected by hepatitis?
9. What is the name of the Hindu monkey god?
10. What anniversary is cinema celebrating this year?

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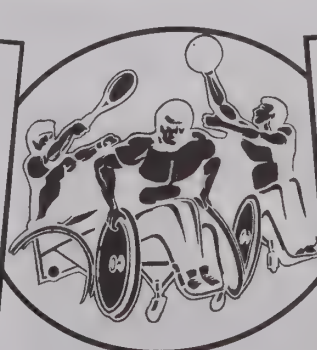
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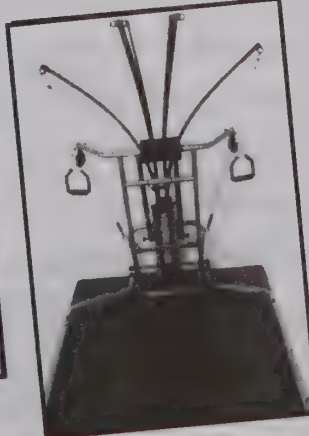
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DN7/96



Do get a move on!

- love and loneliness
- bereavement
- personal problems
- advice and support

A UNIQUE SERVICE!

DN's telephone counsellor Lin Berwick can give disabled people and carers advice and support on personal and spiritual problems. Disabled herself, Lin is a psycho-therapeutic counsellor and fully accredited Methodist local preacher. Talk to her on (01708) 477582 on Thursday afternoons, 1pm-5pm and Mondays 6pm-10pm.



Sponsored by BT

Send your letters to: Ann Darnbrough, *Disability Now*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ

Dear Ann

Over the past 18 months, as a wheelchair user, I have been queueing on Motability's waiting list for an adapted transit van. It has been quite an experience and one I would not wish on my worst enemy. I have had to fight for nearly all the information I've received.

If a person is found guilty for drink driving they get taken off the road for a year or two, but if you are disabled and need an adapted van you are taken off the road for the same period of time. At least able-bodied people can use public transport but this is not so easy if you are disabled. I would like to hear from anyone who has been, or is on, a Motability waiting list and how they have coped.

Maurice, Cirencester

I am so sorry to hear about the trouble you have had.

For the benefit of readers, let me see if I can throw a little light on the gloom.

Motability administers three grant schemes:

- * the Motability Equipment Fund for adaptations for people with severe disabilities

* the Drivers' Fund for more complicated solutions

* the Motability Charitable Fund, which advises applicants on the best cost solution to meet their needs. A grant may be available for hand controls, swivel seats, automatic transmission, advance payments on vehicles, and driving lessons. Average grants vary between £800 and £1,000. For new customers there is a waiting list of six months.

The Drivers' Fund is currently suspended, while the Motability Equipment Fund has a waiting list of 18 months. Both are financed by the Government.

Motability's literature does not disguise the fact that access to charitable funding is both difficult and slow. It is deeply regrettable that a charity of this standing should have such a dismal record in dealing with people who need special help. Something needs to be done quickly.

Good luck, and let's hope it won't be too long before you are back on the road.

Dear Ann

I'm not sure whether your

readers will be interested, but I just felt I had to write to tell you about the news I've had from Burke's Peerage that my "distinguished" name, which is rather unusual, is on their records and for £21.95 they would send me a book giving full details plus my Coat of Arms. I am now busy tracing my ancestry.

If anyone has an unusual surname, I recommend them to give it a go. You never know, we disabled people may find we have all sorts of coronets under the bed!

James, Stevenage

Well, I never know what subject my readers will come up with next. As you sign your name adding "Bart", does this mean that we should all address you as "Sir"?

Dear Ann

I have been reading with interest the letters you have had from readers about loneliness and the lack of self-confidence and self-esteem. What they say is so valid and gives hope to what seems an insurmountable problem.

My outward self-confidence and self-worth has improved a lot over the years, but I still have inward niggling doubts about how on earth anyone can love me for who I am, considering my disability.

I have been hurt and rejected and vowed I would not pursue the idea of finding a partner again. But recently I have experienced great loneliness and the need for someone to be close to, and have decided to advertise through *DN*. Seeking partners out in this way does nothing for one's self-esteem. I am 29 and disabled through cancer as a child.

I don't fit in with most disabled people, I know, as they don't seem to have the intellectual capacity that I have, and I don't really feel that able-bodied people, as a group, think I fit in with them.

Some men seem to express their loneliness by describing the effects of the absence of sex, rather than love and companionship. This is a major difference between most men and women, and I think women find this rather off-putting especially if, like myself, you

are not sure if you can perform sex in the way they want it. I have not had a sexual relationship in the normal sense.

The most important thing is for disabled people to have a positive attitude about themselves and I think more could have been done at school and college to encourage this. Segregated schools do not help people to become integrated.

Marian, Exeter

Thank you for your letter and I was glad to hear that your self-confidence and self-worth have improved over the years.

I suppose we all have niggling doubts about how anyone can love us for who we are which, I suppose, adds to the wonderment we feel when someone does love us.

Unfortunately, suffering hurt and rejection are all part of finding the right partner.

Have you considered attending evening classes where you will meet similarly minded people? Try your local library for details of courses.

You may find it challenging to be in touch with the disability movement which has some very bright people in it.

The British Council of Disabled People has a newsletter *Update* which you may find interesting and there may be a group near you.

You say you are not sure if you can perform sex "in the way that they (men) want it".

I think it is important to think of sex in the way you want it. It is vital that it is not seen simply as fulfilling a man's desire. If you fall in love, it will be up to both of you to work out your desires to your mutual satisfaction.

Certainly, there are no rules. It is important that each provides pleasure for the other in whatever way brings contentment.

Motability, Goodman House, Station Approach, Harlow, Essex CM20 2ET, tel: (01279) 635999

*Burke's Peerage, 209 St Johns Hill, London SW11 1TH
British Council of Disabled People, Litchurch Plaza, Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA, tel: (01332) 295551 (voice); (01332) 295581 (Mini-com)*



The New Volkswagen Caravelle by Invatrace Conversions



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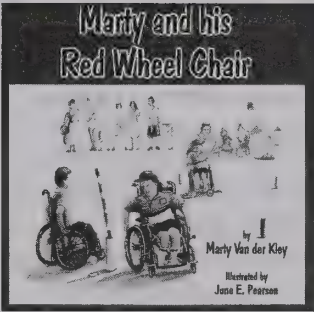
Lives Worth Living: women's experiences of chronic illness
By Veronica Marris
£8.99, Pandora

"I parked the car at the supermarket once and I could see this old couple talking about me, saying, 'She shouldn't park there, that's for disabled people only.' "I confronted them and the woman said, 'You cannot be disabled, you're eating an ice cream and you're walking.' "And I said, 'Because I'm young and not in a wheelchair, I don't come in what you class as disabled. I have to be on morphine to make myself walk. How disabled do you want me to be?'"

This accessible book by a woman with diabetes looks at how women with chronic illnesses and hidden impairments – such as arthritis, asthma, cancer, epilepsy, HIV/AIDS, multiple sclerosis, sickle-cell anaemia and thyroid disease – experience disability differently to those more readily identified as disabled. It includes interviews with 27 women. Common themes emerge: isolation and identity; work and contributing to society; coping with others' attitudes; love, sex and families; dealing with doctors; blame and illness. Marris is good on how less visible impairments and illnesses leave us in limbo – stressing our limitations so we are believed, justifying "good days", envying wheelchair users

their daily badge of difference. Some of the more harrowing pages examine how being the "wrong" race, age, class or sexuality affect diagnoses and treatment: lesbians told they don't need cervical smears, black women lectured repeatedly on pain-relieving drugs; working class women with thyroid problems dismissed as unhealthy and fat. Despite this, many positive aspects are also emphasised. "It made me value me and my time a lot more. I can see women in jobs and relationships kowtowing to situations that are bad. I'm not saying I've used the illness as an excuse, but it makes me determined not to settle for second best, because you never know when you're going to die." Agnes Fletcher

Book news



Marty and his Red Wheel Chair is a personal account of what it's like to have spina bifida by 13-year-old Marty Van der Kley. £5 from Jim Fenton, 10 Llanarth Square, Risca, Gwent, South Wales.

What's on

Conference on civil rights for disabled people on 29 June at the Conference Centre, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA. For a registration form (available in print, large print and on tape) please contact: Brenda Ellis, GLAD People, 336 Brixton Road, London SW9 7AA, tel/minicom: 0171-274 0107.

Conference on disability, virtual reality and related technologies on 8-10 July at the Holiday Inn Hotel in Maidenhead. For more information contact: Maria Papadaki, The Department of Cybernetics, The University of Reading, Whiteknights, PO Box 225, Reading RG6 6AY, tel: (01734) 318219.

Open day at the Papworth Trust, East Anglia's largest disability organisation on 10 July. For further details contact: Pat Leavesley, The Papworth Trust, Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire CB3 8RG, tel: (01480) 830341.

A conference on moving into the community on 10 July in Radlett. This will look at the transition into the community from long stay institutions for people with learning disabilities. For details contact: Playtrac, Horizon NHS Trust, Harperbury, Harper Lane, Radlett, Herts WD7 9HQ, tel: (01923) 854861 ext. 4385/6.

- WHOSE FACE IS IT ANYWAY?**
- 1. Richard Gere
 - 2. Helen Mirren
 - 3. Stevie Wonder
 - 4. Tom Hanks

- TRIVIA TEASERS ANSWERS**
- 1. Henry V
 - 2. Eurodisney
 - 3. Prospero
 - 4. Angus Deayton
 - 5. Brooke Shields
 - 6. Emu
 - 7. Ermintrude
 - 8. The liver
 - 9. Hanumana
 - 10. Centenary

Info

City University is holding a series of seminars on disability, specifically about civil rights issues. For more information contact Colin Low, Rehabilitation Resource Centre, Department of Systems Science, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB, tel: 0171-477 8353/8378.

St Paul's Church Centre in north London has wheelchair accessible rooms for hire. A 15

CROSSWORD ANSWERS

- ACROSS:** 1. Walking frame 7. Mobility aid 8. Agreement 9. Imp 11. Stasis 15. Parking meter 17. Lenin 18. Kettle
- DOWN:** 1. Wombat 2. Liberator 3. Illness 4. Gathers 5. Roast 6. Medium 9. Instant 10. Pouring 12. Innate 13. Spank 14. Smile 16. Kent

seater minibus with a tail-lift is also available for hire by groups. For more information contact Ann Rigby, St Paul's Church Centre, Rossmore Road, London NW1 6NJ, tel: 0171-724 8517.

Specifiers's Handbook 3: automatic door controls by Ann Sawyer is a new publication from the Centre for Accessible Environments. £4 incl p&cp from the Centre for Accessible Environments, Nutmeg House, 60 Gainsford Street, London SE1 2NY, tel: 0171-357 8182.

London Transport has a range of audio tapes for blind and visually impaired travellers using London's buses and the Underground. Free from The Unit for Disabled Passengers, London Transport, 172 Buckingham Palace Road, London SW1W 9TN, tel: 0171-918 3312.

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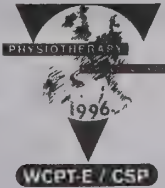
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12-15 SEPTEMBER 1996
DEVONSHIRE PARK CENTRE, EASTBOURNE

This important event will feature keynote physiotherapy speakers from both Europe and the UK. The Congress also includes a large trade exhibition – 'The Shape of Things to Come'. For a full programme and details on registration fees, accommodation and travel please write to the Events Unit, Chartered Society of Physiotherapy, 14 Bedford Row, London WC1R 4ED or fax: 0171 306 6611.



EQUALISING OPPORTUNITIES - a major health & social care exhibition

University of Leeds
17 - 19 July 1996

This major healthcare exhibition is dedicated to promoting independent living and is organised in conjunction with the College of Occupational Therapists' 20th Annual Conference.

ADMISSION TO THE EXHIBITION IS FREE

This exhibition is open to disability groups, people with disabilities, carers, occupational therapists, physiotherapist, social workers and other health and social care professionals.

Visit this major health and social care exhibition and take the opportunity to:

- ▲ discover what the market has to offer from manufacturers and suppliers of a wide range of product and services.
- ▲ discuss specific areas of concern with experts available in a special advice area or members of the Leeds Professional Development Group
- ▲ visit the dedicated transport area with equipment demonstrations and mobile display units.

OPENING TIMES

17 July 09:00 - 18:00 18 July 09:00 - 18:00
19 July 09:00 - 14:00

If you wish to visit the exhibition please call
0171 357 6480 (ext. 204) for your complimentary invitation or complete the form below. Visitors may register on the day.

- ☐ Please send me..... entry tickets to **Equalising opportunities** exhibition
- ☐ Please send me further information regarding the conference

Name:

Address:

Town

Postcode

Tel:

Fax: DN7/96

Please return form to:
Conference Department,
College of Occupational Therapists,
6-8 Marshalsea Road,
London, SE1 1HL
Tel: 0171 357 6480
Fax: 0171 403 3991

Help

Do you try to hide your disability at work? Platform Films is making a film for the BBC's Disabilities Programmes Unit about the problems people have in "coming out" as disabled at work. Would you like to talk about your experiences? Confidentiality is assured. For more information contact: Peter Keighron, Platform Films, 6 Cromer House, Cromer Street, London WC1H 8DB, tel/fax: 0171-730 9641.

Info

Orange Badge Pocket Guide by Dave Allcock contains everything you need to know about the scheme. £2 from Access Committee for England, 38 Albion Street, Crewe, Cheshire CW2 8NG, tel: (01270) 651304.

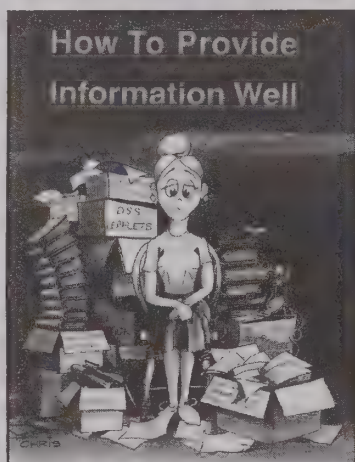
Winning with Dyslexia: a guide for secondary schools by Lindsay Peer contains information about identifying this disability, advice and teaching techniques. £6 (including p&tp) from the Publications Department, British Dyslexia Association, 98 London Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5AU, tel: (01734) 662677.

How to Provide Information Well: a good practical guide is a new publication from the National Information Forum. Topics include: access, privacy and providing information in



Banking on them: students with learning disabilities at Park Lane College in Leeds run a branch of Yorkshire Bank as part of their preparation-for-work course. It is open to all students and staff of the college. Pictured (left to right) are Anne Tissington, Neil Bradburne and Stewart Perkins. Tel: 0113-244 3011.

different formats. Free from The National Information Forum, Post Point 228, BT Proctor House, 100-110 High Holborn, London WC 1V 6LD, tel: 0171-404 3846.



Remap is a charity which designs, manufactures and modifies technical aids for disabled people where there is no suitable commercial item available. There is no charge for disabled people. For more information contact: National Organiser, Eur. Ing. J J Wright, "Hazeldene", Ightham, Kent TN15 9AD, tel: (01732) 883818.

Steve Garrill has compiled a booklet listing self help groups around the country. £2.95 from G-Text, PO Box 33, South Shore, Blackpool, FY4 3GB. (Cheques payable to G-Text.)

The Mobility Advice and Vehicle Information Service has

information for disabled people choosing a car. Contact TRL, Crowthorne, Berkshire RG45 6AU, tel: (01344) 770692.

Epileptic Seizures is a new video from The National Society for Epilepsy (NSE). It explains what epilepsy is and what causes seizures and is designed for nursing or medical staff. NSE, Chalfont St Peter, Gerrards Cross, Bucks SL9 0RJ, tel: (01494) 873991.

Residents' Money: a guide to good practices in care homes is a new Age Concern publication. £6.95 from Age Concern, 1268 London Road, London SW16 4ER, tel: 0181-679 8000.

Look out for

National Festival of Theatre and Learning Disability, 25 June-1 July at the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry. Highlights include Strathcona, Lawnmowers and French company Oiseau Mouche, with their show about some chickens who make their own flying machine in an attempt to escape. For more information contact The Belgrade Theatre, Belgrade Square, Coventry CV1 1GS, tel: (01203) 256431.

Take Note!2, Islington's disability music festival, 6-7 July at The Union Chapel, Compton Avenue, London N5. Rock out with disabled performers Simon Smith and the Useless Eaters and the Heart 'n' Soul Experience and mellow out with ragas from sitar virtuoso Baluji Shrivastav. For more information tel: 0171-477 3850.

A national conference exploring the status of integrated arts in Britain at Bretton Hall in Wakefield on 13-14 July. With speakers from Hereward College, CandoCo Dance Company and the Arts Council of Great Britain. Contact: Rachel Ward, External Relations, University College Bretton Hall, West Bretton, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF4 4LG, tel: (01924) 832024.

The National Association of Drama with the Visually Handicapped is running a summer school 22-27 July at Hazelrigg Hall, Loughborough University. For more details contact David Walker, 2 Maxwell Street, Breaston, Derby DE72 3AH, tel: (01332) 874593.

Artyfacts

Audio Description in the Theatre and in Music Venues: a guide for users is an information sheet from the Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB). Available in large print, braille or on cassette. For a copy contact Anne Robson, RNIB, 224 Great Portland Street, London W1N 6AA, tel: 0171-388 1266.

The Living Paintings Trust has a free loan service of albums. Each contains ten thermoforms or raised images of works of art with an accompanying cassette. There is also a free library service of children's books with raised images. The Living Paintings Trust, Queen Isabelle House, Unit 8, Kingsclere Park, Kingsclere, Newbury, Berkshire RG20 4SW, tel: (01635) 299771.

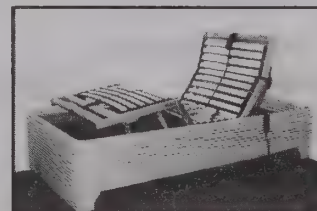
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DN7/96

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The holiday will be from 9-13 September and includes travel by adapted coach from one of four pick up points in the South of England (up to £50 will be refunded for travel to and from the pick up point).

You will stay in the luxurious Santa Fe Hotel, run by Disney and situated on the site itself.

One double room (with double bed) and bathroom fully adapted for a wheelchair user is available, or an unadapted room and bathroom on the ground floor with two double beds, which is wheelchair accessible (tried and tested).

Bed and breakfast are included in the prize plus £200 spending money, donated by Travelcare, who will also provide free holiday insurance to the winners.

Don't miss this chance of a lifetime. Just fill in the coupon in the advertisement below and you

could be on your way to France. Bon chance! Closing date: 16 August. The winning entry will be pulled from a hat. Offer not open to DN staff or associates.

Travelcare
tel: (0800)
181532



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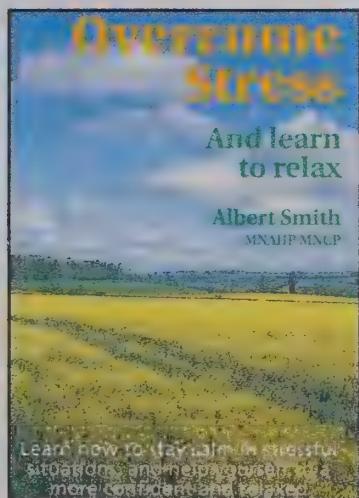
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effectively. In fact I never hear him end the session!"

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(to cover the cost of handling and p&cp). It will be sent within 14 days with a voucher worth £2 off the price of further cassettes.

Choose from: *Overcome Stress, Overcome Insomnia, Depression: the way through, No more Panic Attacks, Relax and Feel Good, Pain Management, and Ocean Symphony*.

Send cheques (payable to Albert Smith Health Cassettes) stating which tape you would like to: Albert Smith Health Cassettes, 183 Frinton Road, Frinton-on-Sea, Essex CO13 0PA.

Offer ends 30 September 1996.

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Each camera is worth £9.99, but you could have one for free!

Just send a postcard with your name and address to: Camera Offer, *Disability Now*, 12 Park Crescent, London W1N 4EQ.

Winning entries will be pulled from a hat. Offer not open to DN staff or associates.

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DN7/96

DEADLINES FOR AUGUST ISSUE: booking by 12 July, camera ready artwork/copy by 16 July.

Holidays continued

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Luxury caravans (one specially designed for wheelchair users and their families). On beautifully situated, friendly family run park. 250 yds from sandy beach. Heated pool. Bar/restaurant. Games room. Sunrise Bay Holiday Park, Llansteffan, Carmarthen, Dyfed, SA33 5LP. Phone: 01267 241394.

THE GABLES SOUTH SHROPSHIRE
B&B wheelchair accessible spacious house in glorious countryside near Ludlow. Welsh borders and Ironbridge within easy reach. Ring 01588 660667 or Fax 01588 660799 for brochure and terms. The Gables, Broome Craven Arms, Shropshire SY7 0NX.

Blagdon Farm Country Holidays Devon/Cornwall border
Superb, south-facing, wheelchair accessible luxury bungalows overlooking lake and set within 38 acres of glorious countryside. Many on-site facilities including tea room/shop. Take-away meals and equipment hire available. Tourist Board Highly Commended. For colour brochure please contact:
Pauline and Tony Blight, Blagdon Farm, Ashwater, Beaworthy, Devon EX21 5DF. Phone: 01409 211509. Fax: 01409 211510

PENROSE BURDEN NORTH CORNWALL "1992 Holiday Care Award Winners"
Holiday Cottages designed for wheelchair users and their families. Rural setting with superb views. Dogs welcome. Wood burning stoves and daily meal service. Please ring or write for colour brochure. R&N Hall, Penrose Burden, St Breward, Bodmin, Cornwall PL30 4LZ. Telephone Bodmin (01208) 850277 or 850617.

Britanny Cottage to let. Fully adapted for wheelchair use. Good access to beaches. Sleeps up to 6. Details **C. Hodgson. Tel: (01924) 454300.**

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3 cottages, all wheelchair accessible. Rural location and overlooking by 12th century castle. Ideally situated for exploring South and West Wales. Each cottage sleeps 4, central heating, CTV, games/fitness rooms, laundry, extensive grounds. Open all year, short breaks available. Tel: Catherine McLoughlin (01558) 823059 for brochure.

St. Leonards, Sussex
7 berth caravan adapted for disabled people on Haven Site. For colour brochure, Tel: Shepway MS (01303) 892850.

Property for sale

HOUSE IN SHERBORNE, DORSET. Attractive, three storey. Built about 1895. Three plus bedrooms. Adapted for wheelchair user: lift to first floor, low level kitchen, floors even, wide doorways, no steps. Carport. Quiet, residential road. Half mile from abbey and shops. Sitting room leads on to sunny terrace. 90ft garden well kept. Good views. £159,000. Tel: 0181-742 3170.

ISLE OF WIGHT. Semi detached house plus purpose built annexe for wheelchair user or elderly relative. Large gardens, driveway and garage. Convenient to local amenities. Tel: (01983) 527087.

ATTRACTIVE, THREE BEDROOM semi. Ground floor bathroom, three reception rooms (one was a bedroom), extended kitchen, large garage, gardens. Near shops, doctor. Llantrisant, Mid Glamorgan. M4 two and a half miles. £64,950. Tel: (01443) 224415.

Property to let

SEMI DETACHED BUNGALOW built for wheelchair user. Fully furnished. Nine years old. To let. £400 per calendar month. Tel: (01484) 854104 (Huddersfield).

Wanted

HOLIDAY SUPPORT. Two volunteers to support a husband and wife with cerebral palsy on a foreign holiday (1997). Experience preferred but not essential as training will be provided. For further information please write to Box No. 911 at DN, address on page 2. Expenses will be paid. Only require own spending money.

I AM LOOKING for a touring tricycle - can you help? Tel: 0181-985 9595.

Courses

UNIVERSITY OF SHEFFIELD CENTRE FOR PSYCHOTHERAPEUTIC STUDIES

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For further information contact:

Judith Taylor, Centre for Psychotherapeutic Studies,
16 Claremont Crescent, Sheffield S10 2TA.

Tel: 0114 276 8555 ext 4970 Fax: 0114 270 0619

email j.m.taylor@sheffield.ac.uk

Extensive information about the centre, its programmes and its staff is available on the internet at <http://www.shef.ac.uk/~psyscl>

Disabled person? Carer? Professional worker?

Whatever your perspective, the new **MSc in Disability Studies** at King Alfred's College will challenge your personal experience of disability.

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- **As a health or social care worker**, the programme will explore your perceptions and highlight the ways in which society excludes the disabled.

The MSc in Disability Studies can be followed as a one year full-time, or two year part-time programme. To find out more, contact the College on 01962 827375.

The Institution is a registered charity and exists solely to provide education facilities in the community.

King Alfred's Winchester
a University sector College



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For further information, please contact Mrs Munling Shields at the Rehabilitation Resource Centre, City University, Northampton Square, London EC1V 0HB. Tel: 0171 477 8378. Fax: 0171 477 8356.
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TO ADVERTISE YOUR VACANCIES/COURSES please contact the **Advertisement Manager, Richard Gresham, Kingslea Press Limited, 12 Dock Offices, Surrey Quays Road, London SE16 2XU. Tel: 0171-252 1362. Fax: 0171-237 8019.**

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BN17 7RN
Tel: 01903 733528 Fax: 01903 733530

GBL Eastern: Ermine Street North,
Papworth Everard, Cambridgeshire, CB3 8RG
Tel: 01480 831212 Fax: 01480 831414

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Personal

HELP! AMPUTEE WIDOWER with narcolepsy, needs help to catch up with the world. Somewhere there must be a kind lady who would move to mid Wales to share a difficult, but potentially very rewarding life. Needs an organiser with a sense of humour, slightly artistic, able to drive, dog lover, non smoker. Disabled person welcome. Box No. 912

CAN I WIN YOUR HEART? Disabled guy, 28, seeks friendship from female (disabled or not) in the London area to talk to and spend time together and anything she likes to do. Box No. 913

SINGLE MALE, 39, living in Avon. Non-smoker. 5ft 10in tall. Slim build. Good appearance. Own home and car. Slightly disabled. Interests include the countryside and cinema. Wishes to meet a sincere, honest lady to share life and interests. Box No. 9134

MALE LOOKING FOR a female partner who is friendly, outgoing and understanding. Box No. 915

25-YEAR-OLD MALE easy to get on with. Enjoys discos a lot. Fun to be with. Looking for girl aged 18-25 as a good friend, leading to possible relationship. Box No. 916

DISABLED MALE, 39, with leg disability would like to meet disabled lady with similar disabilities. Various interests. Lots of love to give to the right lady. Box No. 917

MALE STUDENT AGED 22, living in Ghana. Enjoys football, table tennis and watching films. Looking for penpals. Box No. 918

LADY WHO IS hard of hearing wishes to hear from anyone who has had an operation for otitis-sclerosis. Box No. 919

DISABLED MAN, 46, living in North London. Has asthma and scoliosis (spinal curvature). Seeks kind, caring, sincere lady, 30s-40s for friendship, possibly lasting relationship. Though I drive, I would prefer to meet someone from London or the home counties. Box No. 897

PE TEACHER, 37. Became slightly disabled shortly after qualification. Seeks female 30 plus of same outlook: positive, understanding, supportive. West Yorkshire. Write and find out more and be pleasantly surprised. Shalom. Box No. 920

FEMALE FROM DEVON. Please contact me again. I have tried your number with no success. Box No. 921

MALE AGED 21 with mild cerebral palsy living in south Bucks. Looking for young lady of similar age who likes animals and going to pubs and gigs. If you are that person, please write to me. Box No. 922

I AM A YOUNG LOOKING single 40-year-old man with a disability. I wish to meet a fun-loving lady aged 25-45. I enjoy eating out, concerts and the cinema. I own my own property and drive a car. I live in Redditch, Worcestershire. All replies will be answered. Box No. 923

FEMALE AGED 25 born deaf but had good speech until illness which left some physical disability. Still mobile. Would like to meet a male 25-30ish who has patience, a sense of humour and likes to converse. Preferably south London/ Surrey area. Please write. Box No. 924

COUPLE IN THEIR '30s would like to meet other couples. Fun outlook more important than age, looks or disability. Box No. 925

To reply to a personal ad indicate the box number and mark the envelope private and confidential. If you do not it will be opened. Send to DN, address on page 2.

Recruitment

The Access Committee for England promotes the provision of accessible environments that enable disabled people to achieve their full potential. We are seeking to appoint two people, initially on a fixed term until March 1998, to team up with existing members of staff in our City Forum Office.

Applicants will need to demonstrate an understanding of the importance of an accessible built environment. Communication/presentation skills (written, verbal and IT) are essential: willingness to undertake some travel and occasional flexible hours in both posts.

POLICY OFFICER

£22,440 pa (NJC 35)

A creative thinker with sound technical knowledge, an ability to work with voluntary committees and manage a small office.

DEVELOPMENT OFFICER (Training and Information)

£19,266 pa (NJC 29)

An effective communicator, knowledge of training techniques and with expertise in the production of publications.

For further information write for an application pack with SAE to:

**Access Committee for England,
12 City Forum, 250 City Road,
London EC1V 8AF**

Closing date 31 July 1996.

Access
Committee for
England

Festival

Mencap & Gateway

**Jubilee Festival
Vision into Action**

Cardiff Caerdydd 23-26 August 1996
Cardiff International Arena

Over the August Bank Holiday, hundreds of Mencap members, service users and staff will be getting together to reflect on 50 years of campaigning for people with a learning disability, and to plan for the future. As an existing or potential partner of Mencap, we would be delighted if you would join us.

The extensive programme of presentations, workshops and seminars contain a wealth of material covering every conceivable learning disability issue.

And like all birthday celebrations, we are planning to make the weekend both memorable and enjoyable. A gala dinner, a medieval evening at Cardiff castle, and sports and arts activities are included in the price.

The full festival cost, including all meals is £120.00, and accommodation begins at £18.00 per night.

For a programme, or to book a place, please contact
Lorraine Johnson on 0171 696 5547
or write to

**Mencap, 123 Golden Lane,
London EC1Y 0RT
Fax 0171 696 5548**

YOUNG LADY, 26, wheelchair user. Seeks friendship with able-bodied man aged 25-35 years. Must be a non-smoker, have a good sense of humour and fun-loving. Being house trained would be an advantage. I enjoy days out, concerts, eating out, cooking and some quiet nights in by the fire. Photo appreciated. All letters will be answered. Box No. 926

GROOVY YOUNG WOMAN, 26. Very active wheelchair user. Loves films (*Point Break*), music ('70s disco to Led Zep), sci-fi, clubbing and late nights. Seeks cool guy to hang out with and maybe nights in! All letters answered. Box No. 927

SINCERE, SINGLE, 31-YEAR-OLD guy with MS, living in the North East. Mobile and outgoing with many interests, including media production, Tai-Chi, laughter and

life. Sadly disillusioned with so-called friends in the past. Would like people near and far in similar age band, to share good times with. Box No. 928

NIGEL AGED 21 with heart condition and scoliosis. 5ft 2in, fair hair, blue eyes, seeks young lady aged 18-27 with slight disabilities to share interests within 100 miles of Blackpool. Likes walking short distances, swimming, computer games and driving. Box No. 929

For personal ads please send a cheque or postal order for £3 payable to Disability Now with your ad. This is to help cover our costs.

BLACK RIGHTS WORKER (LOCUM)

until JULY 1997 (one year contract but would become permanent if the present post holder does not return to post); £18,574 (plus pending pay award); 35 hours. SALFORD LAW CENTRE needs an experienced Black Rights Worker to fill this post. The post holder will work collectively to maintain the overall functioning of the Law Centre; and continue the provision of Law Centre services to Black and Minority Ethnic communities of Salford.

Closing date: 10/07/96 - Interviews 24th or 25th July 1996.

For further details, access info and application form:

**SALFORD LAW CENTRE
498 Liverpool Street, Salford M6 5QZ
Tel/ Minicom: 0161 736 3116 (Poddy)**

We are seeking to be an equal opportunities employer. This post is only open to black applicants. Exemptions under the Race Relations Act 1976s5(2)(a) applies. We welcome applications from women, disabled people, and those facing other types of discrimination.

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SOUTHWARK DISABLEMENT ASSOCIATION

An organisation of and for disabled people

ADVOCACY WORKER

36 hours, £17,500 pa

We require someone with the ability to support local disabled people with their choice of living dependence.

Over the last five years the success of this service has been due to excellent listening and interpersonal skills, a sharp awareness of disability issues, knowledge and experience of the way Social Service and Housing Departments operate and their changing roles in addressing care needs in the community.

We are looking to fill this post, which is funded by a Service Agreement through to 31st March 1999, by 1st September 1996.

Closing date for completed applications 12 noon 18th July 1996. Interviews week beginning 22nd July 1996.

SDA is an Equal Opportunities Employer. Applications from people who are disabled, black or from minority ethnic groups or gay are welcomed.

For application forms and details please write to

David Stock

**Southwark Disablement Association
2 Bradenham Close, Albany Road
London SE17 2QB**

HACKNEY AFRICAN & CARIBBEAN GROUP OF PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES
is an organisation of and for African and Caribbean disabled people in Hackney.

We are looking for a

Disability Development Worker

Salary A&C Grade 5 £15,357 (pro rata 18 hours per week) to develop its links and support with disabled people from the African and Caribbean communities. A good awareness and understanding of disability and African Caribbean culture will be essential to this post.

Due to the nature of the work we are looking to employ someone who has a disability and of an African Caribbean origin.

For an application pack please telephone 0181 525 1195, or write to

**Hackney African & Caribbean Group of People with Disabilities
Alfred Heath Day Centre
186 Homerton High Street, London E9 6AG**

Closing date for completed application 31st July 1996.

Action and Rights are seeking to appoint a disabled person from an Ethnic Minority as an

Advocacy Training Worker (30 hours £14,773 Scale S01.29) and a disabled person as an

Admin Assistant (25 hours £8,814 Scale 4.18).

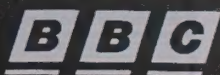
Closing date for applications 19 July 1996.

Posts funded by National Lottery Charities Board.

Action and Rights is striving to be an Equal Opportunities Employer. Section 5 (2) (d) of the Race Relations Act 1976 applies to the Advocacy Post.

Please state which post you wish to apply for and write for details to Haq Ismail, **Action and Rights of Disabled People in Newham**, c/o Community Links, 105 Barking Road, Canning Town, London E16 4HQ.

Recruitment continued



Working for equality of opportunity

Could **you** spot our next **award-winning** **television** drama? **Script Readers**

Over the next 12 months we will be offering a number of 6 month contracts for script readers to work across the range of Drama output.

The BBC broadcasts the most extensive and diverse range of television drama in the world. Programmes range from **Pride and Prejudice**, **EastEnders**, **Silent Witness**, and **Ballykissangel** to Single Dramas such as **Go Now**, **Trip Trap** and **Skallagrig**. An important part of our work is reading and assessing the large quantity of unsolicited scripts and you'll be the first stage filter for them.

You'll need a good standard of education with preferably 'A' level English or equivalent. You will need experience and enthusiasm for drama through, for example, your involvement in television, film or theatre. Your interests and outlook on life will reflect the diverse range of our programmes and you will have a curiosity about what's going on in the world. You will work well in a team and have tact and sensitivity to communicate advice and constructive criticisms.

We would particularly welcome applications from people with disabilities as they are under-represented in this category.

We can offer a salary of £16,000 and you will be based in West London. You will be required to complete a script report as part of the application.

For an information pack and application form please contact (quote ref. 21776/DI) Shirley Mulcahy on 0181-576 4507. Application forms to be returned by July 16th.

West of England Coalition of Disabled People

require Disabled People for:

FINANCE & ADMIN WORKER

21 hours per week. Salary £13,197-£14,472 (APT & C pt 22-25) Responsibilities include maintaining computerised financial systems, manual accounts and PAYE and overseeing the administrative and clerical systems of the Coalition. Training can be given in some areas although understanding of finances is essential.

TYPIST/CLERICAL WORKER

14 hours per week. Salary £10,797-£11,538 (APT & C pt 15-18) To provide typing support to Coalition staff using Wordperfect 5.1 - 60 words per minute. Carry out other clerical duties including updating membership data base.

● CLOSING DATE FRIDAY 12 JULY.

● INTERVIEW FRIDAY 2 AUGUST.

For further details and application pack please contact:

WECODP, 6 Sommerville Road, Bishopston, Bristol BS7 9AA
Tel: 0117 9420721

We particularly welcome applications from black people who are under represented in the staff team.

G.A.D.-C.I.L. Ltd is a voluntary organisation aiming to support and campaign for Independent Living for disabled people within the London Borough of Greenwich. We have two vacancies for new exciting projects, both are 3-year contracts.

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To recruit and support six disabled people on to Counselling Training from certificate to diploma level. Applicant must have experience of Counselling, Training and Supervision. Ability to manage own workload is essential.

YOUNG G.A.D. WORKER

17½ hours per week

To develop services for young adults with learning difficulties. Experience of working with people with learning difficulties, group work skills and managing own workload is essential. BSL skills are desirable.

Closing date: 26th July 1996

The above posts are open to **disabled people only**.

Write for details and application form to

The Director, G.A.D.-C.I.L. Ltd, Christchurch Forum, Trafalgar Road, Greenwich, London SE10 9EQ or fax on 0181 293 3455.

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COMMUNITY EDUCATION

We require from September 1996 part-time tutors for the following subjects:

Rate of pay **£16.52 per hour inc.**

SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS

(Disabled persons are positively encouraged to apply for this post as the council is under represented by this group of staff)

Computing

Lifeskills for Independence

Money Management

Ref: CE379

REPLIES

The closing date for receipt of all application forms unless otherwise stated is 4pm Friday 12 July 1996.

For further information and an application form please send an A4 stamped addressed envelope indicating the subject and reference number on the left hand corner. To: Personnel Office, Lambeth Community Education, Strand Centre, Elm Park, SW2 2EH.

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quality services and equal opportunities for all.

LAMBETH
EDUCATION

British Council of Organisations of Disabled People

Independent Living Unit -

Unit Manager

NJC Grade POG: SP41 (£23,913)

BCODP is setting up a unique national Independent Living Advisory and Training Service, which will be based on an information resource and delivered via a team of independent living consultants. The service will supply advice on the mechanics of establishing independent living schemes; including negotiating support and finance from statutory services, training, housing and employing workers. The service will be available to disabled people, organisations of disabled people and to professionals or allies working in partnership with disabled people.

BCODP is seeking a disabled person with the appropriate skills and experience of independent living and disability issues to head this new development. You will be at the forefront of a unique national development which has the potential to make a substantial contribution to the lives of disabled people. Ideally, the Unit will be based in our Derby office but we are happy to consider applications from people who feel able to establish the unit within their own locality.

To obtain an information pack about this post (state your preferred format) contact:

Brian Hicks, BCODP, Litchurch Plaza,
Litchurch Lane, Derby DE24 8AA
Telephone: 01332 295551 Fax: 01332 295580
Minicom: 01332 295581

Closing date for applications is Friday 26th July 1996.



DISABLEMENT ASSOCIATION HILLINGDON

DASH Works for People with Disabilities in Hillingdon

INDEPENDENT LIVING CO-ORDINATOR

Initially 2 Year Contract. Salary Scale SO1 Sp29 £13,787 (inclusive of London Weighting), for a 28 hour week.

This post is jointly funded by Hillingdon Social Services and Health Authority to further research and develop an Independent Living Scheme for disabled people.

The post holder needs to be able to offer advice and support to disabled people wishing to live independently, research local support agencies and work in partnership with Social Services.

A broad knowledge, as well as a full commitment, to the Independent Living Concept is essential.

This post is **ONLY** open to disabled people. It is based at the DASH office which is fully accessible. Applicants are invited to indicate on the application form any practical support they may need.

Closing date: Friday 2nd August 1996.

For further information and an application form please write to:

DASH, Hillingdon Independent Living Centre, Colham Road,
Off Royal Lane, Hillingdon, Middlesex UB8 3QW

Please specify format: large print or tape is available.

Registered Charity No. 294045

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Personal

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understanding able bodied persons

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Member of ABIA

ATTRACTIVE FEMALE, 36. Young looking, bright, easy-going, interesting. Seeks genuine friendship with single males and females in similar age group (up to 50), in London. I enjoy socialising, eating out, sport, videos, good conversation etc. I have hidden sensory impairments, but no physical disability. It would be easier to receive replies from able-bodied and mobile people. Box No. 934

LIKEABLE MALE, 46, seeks lady 35 plus for friendship and maybe romance. I am easy going with a good sense of humour. I have a flat in south London. My interests include eating out, socialising, travel and I am the English national Boccia champion. With all this I barely have time to have cerebral palsy! Box No. 935

SINGLE MAN, 50, able-bodied, formerly in caring profession, has mild anxiety disorder and over-active bladder. Welcomes replies from unattached women, preferably with similar problems. Confidentiality assured. Box No. 936

DESPERATELY SEEKING LOVE! Single, male, 36, who has cerebral palsy with own flat and wheels seeks fun loving understanding lady for friendship with a view to a special relationship. Will travel. Box no. 938

FUN LOVING ABLE-BODIED mature male from the East seeks fun loving disabled mature female for long-term fascinating friendship. Box No. 939

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Noel's party gets airborne: Laura Smith, from Essex, makes friends with Noel Edmonds. She was one of 350 youngsters with special needs to get a helicopter ride, thanks to the Airborne charity.

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